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Nīścaldās and his *Vṛttiprabhākar*: Advaita Vedānta in the Vernacular

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Abstract

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This dissertation is a study of Swāmī Nīscaldās (1791-1863 CE), a highly regarded Advaita Vedāntin and Dādūpanthī, who lived in what is now the state of Haryana in Northern India. Nīscaldās is best known for his *Vicārsāgar* and *Ṛttiprabhākar*, both written in Hindi. The dissertation examines Nīscaldās's motivations for writing in the vernacular, as opposed to Sanskrit, with which he was also well-versed, by presenting his life and works, particularly the *Ṛttiprabhākar*. In the process, the influence on Nīscaldās's stance on caste and religion of Dādū Dayāl and his sect and possibly also of Nīscaldās's patron, Rājā Rāmsiṃha of Būndī, as well as that of classical Vedānta as presented in the works of Śaṅkarācārya and others in the Advaita tradition, is explored. The latter half of this dissertation then presents an in-depth reading of his *Ṛttiprabhākar* in order to thoroughly understand Nīscaldās's standpoint on the inter-related issues of caste, soteriology, philosophy, scripture, tradition and theology. There, Nīscaldās uses the key Advaita concept of *ṛtti* or "mental modification by which cognition occurs" as a novel structuring device to present a wide-ranging survey of prevailing Vedānta thought. In the process of answering three questions, namely, 1) "what is a *ṛtti*," 2) "what is the cause of a *ṛtti*," and 3) "what is the purpose of a *ṛtti*," he presents his perspectives on the central issues of Advaita pertaining to the means of cognition (*pramāṇa*), the nature of valid (*pramā*) and indirect, erroneous cognitions (*apramā*), superimposition (*adhyāsa*) as the means of erroneous cognition, the nature of ignorance (*avidyā*), reality (*sattā*) vs. illusoriness (*mithyātva*), and the means for,

and the nature of, the cessation of ignorance (*kalpita-nivṛtti*). Niścaldās's presentation of differences in the standpoints of past Advaitins and his proposed reconciliations, his stance on the diversity of doctrinal interpretations, his relation to the Vedānta literature and tradition, his acceptance of the theory that perception is creation (*dr̥ṣṭi-sṛṣṭi-vāda*), and his position on reason versus revelation are explored. These issues provide us with a deeper insight into Niścaldās's understanding of Advaita Vedānta and the influence it had on his radical choice to compose his works in the vernacular instead of Sanskrit.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<i>AiU</i>	<i>Aitareya Upaniṣad</i>
a.k.a.	also known as
<i>AV</i>	<i>Atharva Veda</i>
<i>BhG</i>	<i>Bhagavad Gītā</i>
<i>Bh</i>	<i>Bhāṣya</i> , commentary
<i>BHSD</i>	<i>Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Dictionary</i> , Edgerton (1953)
<i>BS</i>	<i>Brahma-sūtra</i>
<i>BU</i>	<i>Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad</i>
c.	century
ca.	<i>circa</i> , around
ch., chs.	chapter, chapters
comm.	commentary
<i>CU</i>	<i>Chāndogya Upaniṣad</i>
<i>DJL</i>	Jangopāl's <i>Dādū Janma Līlā</i>
<i>DJV</i>	<i>dharmi-jñāna-vāda</i> , - <i>vādī</i> , substantive cognition, a proponent thereof
<i>DSV</i>	<i>drṣṭi-sṛṣṭi-vāda</i> , the doctrine that perception is creation.
<i>DV</i>	<i>Dādū Vāṇī</i> , Callewaert ed. (1991).
<i>DV^N</i>	<i>Dādū Vāṇī</i> , Nārāyaṇdās ed. (2004).
ed.	edition
<i>EIP</i>	<i>Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies</i> (1981, 1995)
fl.	flourished
<i>Gau. Dh. Sū</i>	<i>Gautama Dharma Sūtras</i>
H	Hindi
intro.	introductory
KCNB	Kavitārṅkika Cakravartī Nṛsiṃha Bhaṭṭopādhyāya
<i>KeU</i>	<i>Kena Upaniṣad</i>
KS	Khemrāj Śrīkrṣṇadās
lit.	literally
<i>MāU</i>	<i>Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad</i>
<i>MāKā</i>	<i>Māṇḍūkya Kārikā</i>
<i>MBh</i>	<i>Mahābhārata</i>
<i>MP</i>	<i>Maniṣā-pañcakam</i> , by Śaṅkara
<i>MuU</i>	<i>Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad</i>
<i>MW</i>	Monier-Williams' <i>Sanskrit-English Dictionary</i> (1899)
n.	(foot)note
<i>Naiṣ</i>	<i>Naiṣkarmya-siddhi</i> of Sureśvara
<i>NṛUTU</i>	<i>Nṛsiṃha-uttara-tāpanīya-upaniṣad</i>

<i>PPV</i>	<i>Pañcapādikā-vivaraṇa</i> of Prakāśātman
Pt.	Paṇḍit
r.	reigned
Raj.	Rajasthan
<i>RHŚK</i>	<i>Rājasthānī Hindī Śabda Kośa</i> (Sākariyā and Sākariyā 1977-84).
<i>RV</i>	<i>Ṛg Veda</i>
<i>SAR</i>	<i>Sarvāṅgī</i> of Rajjab, Callewaert ed. (1978)
<i>ŚBh</i>	<i>Śaṅkara-bhāṣya</i> , commentary by Śaṅkara
<i>ŚDV</i>	<i>Śaṅkara-dig-vijaya</i>
Skt.	Sanskrit
<i>SLS</i>	<i>Siddhānta-leśa-saṅgraha</i> of Appayya Dīkṣita
<i>ŚŚ</i>	<i>Samkṣepa-śārīraka</i> of Sarvajñātman
s.v.	<i>sub verbo/voce</i> , under the word/entry
<i>SV</i>	<i>Sāma Veda</i>
<i>ŚvetU</i>	<i>Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad</i>
<i>TS</i>	<i>Tarka Saṅgraha</i> of Annambhaṭṭa (1963)
<i>TU</i>	<i>Taittirīya Upaniṣad</i>
v., vv.	verse, verses
var.	variant
<i>Vā. Dh. Sū</i>	<i>Vāśiṣṭha Dharma Sūtras</i>
<i>VP</i> n.x, m	<i>Vṛttiprabhākar</i> , ch. n, section x, p. m (Nīscaldās 1899)
<i>VS</i> n.x, m	<i>Vicārsāgar</i> , ch. n, section x, p. m (Nīscaldās 1917b)
vv.	verses
<i>YajV</i>	<i>Yajur Veda</i>
<i>YP</i>	<i>Yukti prakāś</i> (Nīscaldās 1914)
<i>YogVā</i>	<i>Yoga Vāsiṣṭha</i>

DEVANĀGARĪ TRANSLITERATION

अ	a	क / क़	ka	प	pa
आ	ā	ख / ख़	kha	फ / फ़	pha / fa
इ	i	ग / ग़	ga / ga	ब	ba
ई	ī	घ	gha	भ	bha
उ	u	ङ	ṇa	म	ma
ऊ	ū				
ऋ	ṛ	च	ca	य	ya
ॠ	ṝ	छ	cha	र	ra
ए	e	ज / ज़	ja / za	ल	la
ऐ	ai	झ	jha	व	va
ओ	o	ञ	ña	श	śa
औ	au			ष	ṣa
		ट	ṭa	स	sa
		ठ	ṭha	ह	ha
		ड / ड़	ḍa / ṛa		
		ढ / ढ़	ḍha / ṛha	ळ	ḷa
		ण	ṇa		
				ं (anusvāra)	ṁ ¹
		त	ta	ँ (candra-bindū)	ṁ ¹
		थ	tha	ः (visarga)	ḥ
		द	da		
		ध	dha		
		न	na		

1. In stand-alone words or citations of prose passages, if the *anusvāra* or *candra-bindū* is followed by a consonant, it is replaced by the homorganic class nasal for better readability. Thus, सांख्य is rendered as *sāṅkhyā*, पाँच as *pāñc*, परंतु as *parantu*, but संस्कार as *saṁskāra*, हैं as *haiṁ*, तहाँ as *tahāṁ*. For verse citations, the *anusvāra* or *candra-bindū* is preserved as *ṁ*.
2. The inherent ‘a’ sound is preserved in transliteration of verse, but is dropped otherwise for transliterations of Hindi or Marathi prose, unless occurring in an unfamiliar word whose spelling might otherwise be uncertain, for example, *Kad unkā...*, *apne jīvankāl meṁ...*. However, if the stand-alone word denotes a term that occurs unchanged in meaning from the Sanskrit context, the inherent ‘a’ is preserved, for example, *nirvikalpa samādhi*, *jñānaguṇī*.
3. Where a source uses *ja* but intends *za*, I have transcribed as *za*. I do not take any liberties with *kha* vs. *ṣa*, those are reproduced faithfully.

PREFACE

Some conventions followed throughout this dissertation:

1. Common Sanskrit/Hindi terms are not italicized: Brahman, Īśvara, karma, guru
2. Common geographical names are not transliterated: Delhi, Rajasthan. Unfamiliar or less well-known places are transliterated: Būndī, Koṭā, Kihāraulī.
3. Non-English terms when used are italicized, followed by the English translation in parentheses if used infrequently, for example, “Dādū is described as a *naddāf* (cotton carder) who ...”. When the term occurs frequently, only the first instance is accompanied by the translation.
4. In matters of style and formatting, The Chicago Manual of Style (CMOS)¹ has been followed. For example, plurals of non-English terms follow CMOS 7.12: *śāstras*, Dādūpanthīs; possessives of names ending in “s” follow CMOS 7.18: Nīscaldās’s followers; abbreviated text names are italicized, per CMOS 15.8: *VS*.
5. All dates to be understood as Christian Era (CE), unless indicated otherwise. Dates originally given according to the *Vikram Saṃvat* calendar have been converted to CE equivalents by the simplified process of subtracting 57, with the acceptance that this can lead to the CE year being a year earlier for the last two and a half lunar months of the *saṃvat*.
6. “Brahman” with an upper-case “B” denotes the *advaita brahman*, “the undifferentiated ground of all being,” whereas “brahman” with a lower-case “b” denotes the *brāhmaṇa* (H. *brāhman*) priestly caste. (According to Fowler’s (1996, 115, s.v.), the alternate spelling *brahmin* is reserved for ‘highly cultured or intellectually aloof person[s]’ such as originally from New England). By analogy, members of the other three castes are also referred to in unitalicized lower-case, as kṣatriyas, vaiśyas and śūdras.
7. Certain Sanskrit words will be used without translation: Brahman, *ātmā*, Īśvara, *jīva*, *māyā*, karma, *ṛtti*, *upādhi*. These words are either complex concepts that defy satisfactory single-word equivalents and/or their conventional translations are opaque and not necessarily an improvement. Brahman can be rendered as “the indivisible ground of all being,” among other things. *Ātmā* is usually rendered as “self,” Īśvara as “creator,” *jīva* as “individual” or “living being,” *māyā* as “creative power, illusion,” karma as “action,” *ṛtti* as “mental modification,” and *upādhi* as “limiting adjunct.” To avoid procrustean assignment of meaning to other key Sanskrit terms, while the English translations are provided in parentheses following the Sanskrit for the first few uses in a section, I revert to using the Sanskrit term subsequently. A Glossary of key terms has been provided.

¹ *The Chicago Manual of Style*. 2003. 15th ed. University of Chicago Press

8. The terms Advaita and Vedānta are often used independently, and both, in that case, are references to Advaita Vedānta, and Advaitin and Vedāntin, to the subscribers of the school of thought of non-dual Vedānta, of which Śaṅkara was one of the earliest proponents. When other schools of Vedānta are referred to, they are qualified references, for example, Viśiṣṭādvaita, Dvaita, etc.
9. Any translations provided, unless stated otherwise, are my own.

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Thank you.

DEDICATION

To all my teachers.

*veda udadhi bina guru lakhai, lāgai launa samāna;
bādara guru-mukha dvāra hvai, amṛta saiṃ adhikāna.*

The ocean of the Vedas, seems like salt[-water]
To one who studies without a teacher;
[The same, when received as rain] from clouds that are the teacher's words,
Is sweeter than nectar.

– Niścaldās, *VS* v. 3.8

1 Introduction

This dissertation examines the life and works of Swāmī Nīścaldās, a relatively recent Advaita Vedānta proponent who flourished in Haryana in the nineteenth century. Nīścaldās deliberately chose to compose his independent treatises on Vedānta in a vernacular language, Hindi, despite being well-versed in Sanskrit. What were his reasons for doing so? Through a close reading of and his *magnum opus*, the *Vṛttiprabhākar*, what more can we learn about his perspectives on caste, soteriology, philosophy, scripture, tradition and theology? How does he reconcile doctrinal differences in the Advaita tradition? The answers to these questions are inter-related and will provide us a more complete understanding of Nīścaldās and his Advaita standpoint.

To understand Nīścaldās's reasons for composing his works in the vernacular, I examine what is known about his origins, history, and patronage. I also examine the broader context of the Dādū Panth to which he belonged and compare his views on caste to that of the founder, Dādū Dayāl, and Dādū's earliest disciples, and also to the views of Śaṅkara, one of the earliest Advaitins whose writings are available to us. I present what Nīścaldās himself has to say on this subject in his writings, particularly his *Vicārsāgar* and his *Vṛttiprabhākar*. The latter half of this dissertation then takes a detailed look at the *VP* and presents Nīścaldās's unique Advaita perspective and the influence it had on his decision to write in the vernacular.

Swāmī Nīścaldās (1791-1863 CE) wrote three works, all in Hindi, on Advaita Vedānta: the popular and widely available *Vicārsāgar* (*VS*), "The Ocean of Contemplation," the philosophically erudite *Vṛttiprabhākar* (*VP*), "The Illuminator of *Vṛtti*,"² and the lesser-known *Yukti prakāś* (*YP*), "The Light of Analogical Reasoning." These works are distinctive due to their originality and relative contemporaneity; the most recent, *VP*, being barely 150 years old.³ Nīścaldās is highly regarded within indigenous Vedānta circles but very little has been written in English-language scholarship about his life and works. To date, we have Lala Sreeram's translation of the *VS*, titled *The Metaphysics of the Upanishads: Vichar Sagar* (Nischaladasa 1885), Surendra Kumar Shrivastava's *The Essential Advaitism (The Philosophy of Nīścaldāsa)* (1980), and Kamal Shivkumar's *The Philosophy of Advaita: As Expounded by Nīścaldās with Special Reference to his Vṛtti-Prabhākar* (2009). Even in Hindi, apart from translations or commentaries, there are only two independent works devoted to Nīścaldās: Raṅjīt Siṃha's *Sant*

² The term *vṛtti* is deliberately being left untranslated for now. It will be described thoroughly in Ch. 5.

³ It is believed that Nīścaldās had not finalized the *VP* text by his untimely demise in 1863 CE. See section 10.6 on p. 369.

Nīścaldās – Vyaktitva aur Kṛtitva, “Saint Nīścaldās: The Man and His Works” (1981), and Indu Bālā Kapil’s *Sant Nīścaldās aur unkī Dārśanik Cetanā*, “Saint Nīścaldās and His Philosophical Thought” (2005); both of these are written over a century after Nīścaldās’s death.

I first encountered references to Nīścaldās and his *Vṛttiprabhākar* (*VP*) in 2005 while researching the authorship of the *Pañcadaśī*, a fourteenth-century Advaita Vedānta text attributed to Vidyāraṇya, for my MA thesis. Scholars such as S. N. Dasgupta in his *History of Indian Philosophy* as well as Thangaswami’s *Bibliographical Survey of Advaita Vedānta Literature* (following Dasgupta) incorrectly list the *Vṛttiprabhākar* as a commentary on the *Pañcadaśī* (Pahlajrai 2005, 6).⁴ In Radhakrishnan’s *Indian Philosophy*, Nīścaldās’s *Vṛttiprabhākar* is barely mentioned, and only then in a footnote in connection with Vidyāraṇya (1923-27, 451n1). Thangaswami’s *Survey* does not mention the *Vicārsāgar* at all.

However, other scholars and thinkers, especially contemporaries of Nīścaldās, consider his works to be highly significant. For example, Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902 CE) states: “... the great Nishchaladāsa, the celebrated author of *Vichāra sāgara*, which book has more influence in India than any that has been written in any language within the last three centuries...” (1972, 4:335). Dayananda Saraswati (1824-1883 CE), founder of the Ārya Samāj and staunch critic of Advaita Vedānta, in his *Satyārthaprakāśa*, *Light of Truth* (1963, 393-4; 1915, 355-6), selects for attack the views of Nīścaldās, specifically Nīścaldās’s *Vṛttiprabhākar*, along with those of Vasiṣṭha and Śaṅkara.⁵ In addition to Vivekananda and Dayananda Saraswati,⁶ other scholars and religious figures also held Nīścaldās in high regard. For example, Ramana Maharshi (1879-1950 CE) wrote the *Vicāra Maṇi Mālā*, Jewel Garland of Enquiry, a “compilation of the salient points” of the *VS* in Tamil, based on the Tamil translation of the *VS* (Ramana and Sankaracharya 2002, 98). The Sāī Bābā (1836-1918 CE) of Śīrdī, Maharashtra, who is regarded as a saint by Hindu and Muslim devotees alike, is also said to have given discourses on the *VS* and recommended its study (Dabholkar 2002, 111).

⁴ Nīścaldās make numerous references to the various sections of the *Pañcadaśī* in *VP*, such as its *Citra-dīpa* (*PD* 6, *VP* 8.8, 348; 8.13-17, 350-2), *Pañcakośa-viveka* (*PD* 3, *VP* 8.17, 353), *Brahmānanda* (*PD* 11-15, *VP* 8.19, 355), *[Mahā] Bhūtaviveka* (*PD* 2, *VP* 8.23, 359) and *Trpti-dīpa* (*PD* 7, *VP* 8.26, 360), and also to the views of Vidyāraṇya throughout *VP*.

⁵ Dayananda Saraswati attacks Nīścaldās for inferring the identity of *jīva* and Brahman on account of both being consciousness (*jīvo brahmābhinnah, cetanatvāt*, *VP* 2.9, 44).

⁶ It may also be more than a coincidence that both Vivekananda and Dayananda had strong ties to Bengal. Nīścaldās is known to have visited Nadiyā, Bengal to study Nyāya (Siṃha 1981, 6).

Vernacular treatises on Advaita typically tend to be translations of or commentaries on existing Sanskrit works. It is noteworthy that Niścaldās chose to write his original and independent works in the vernacular instead of the more traditional (and prestigious) Sanskrit. The influence of Niścaldās's published works, particularly the *VS*, is vast, at least in part a result of their having being written in, as Niścaldās himself terms it, *bhāṣā* (vernacular Hindi) as opposed to Sanskrit. The first part of this dissertation is therefore a study of Niścaldās's deliberate choice to engage with the vernacular as opposed to the more cosmopolitan Sanskrit through an exploration of his origins and influences. The language of Niścaldās may be characterized as Braj-like, with influence of the Haryana dialect, Bāṅgrū or Haryānvī.⁷ Both the *VS* and the *VP* were composed in Kihaṛaulī, Haryana and therefore it may be appropriate to consider Niścaldās's language as Haryānvī, though the Hindi language as well as of its dialects at the time of Niścaldās was still very much in flux, a blend of undefined dialects and not yet standardized.

Chapter 2 begins with a review of all the sources from which Niścaldās's biographical profile can be constructed, including prefatory matter to early published editions of his works. Throughout this biographical profile, attention is given to key events that might be considered to have influenced his decision to write in the vernacular. Chapter 2 also provides an overview of Niścaldās's published works and mention his many unpublished works, which are no longer extant. The possible influence of Niścaldās's patron, Rājā Rāmsiṃha of Būndī, Rajasthan, on Niścaldās's deliberate choice to write in the vernacular will also be discussed.

Niścaldās was a member of the Dādū Panth (lit. the Way of Dādū), a group founded by Dādū Dayāl (1544-1603 CE), comprising followers of Dādū Dayāl's message. In chapter 3, the life and teachings of Dādū Dayāl are investigated to determine what, if any, influence the life experiences and teachings of Dādū might have had on Niścaldās, and whether or not there are any parallels between the lives of Niścaldās and Dādū, for example, in their attitudes towards patronage, religion and caste. As in the case of Niścaldās, biographical evidence regarding Dādū Dayāl is largely based on hagiographic accounts, and hence a comparison of their biographies as hagiographies is undertaken to investigate commonalities between Dādū and Niścaldās. The utterances of Dādū were compiled by his followers into a collection known as the *Dādū Vāṇī*

⁷ According to Ethnologue.com, the online version of *Ethnologue: Languages of the World* maintained by SIL International, Bāṅgrū/Haryānvī has a 92% lexical similarity with Braj Bhāṣā (<http://www.ethnologue.com/language/bgc>, accessed 08/26/2013).

(*DV*), and a small selection from the *DV* is examined to develop a sense of Dādū's stance regarding religion and caste. Some selections from the corpus of two of Dādū's most famous, immediate disciples, Rajjab (1567?-1689 CE), and Sundardās (1596-1689~ CE) are also explored in order to determine whether the disciples' positions on these matters diverge from those of their teacher, Dādū. This chapter also explores the internal structure of the Dādū Panth, as well as Niścaldās's place within it, in an effort to understand whether or not the strength or weakness of Niścaldās's affiliation with the Panth may have had a bearing on Niścaldās's decision to write in the vernacular.

Chapters 2 and 3 thus set the stage for a closer look at what Niścaldās himself has to say regarding his writing in the vernacular. This is undertaken in chapter 4, where his *VS* and *VP* texts are closely examined to gain an understanding of Niścaldās's position on the vernacular. Here, Niścaldās's position is compared with Sheldon Pollock's theory of vernacularization, the historical process of deliberately producing literature in local languages (such as Hindi), in forms similar to those found in the dominant literary culture (for example, Sanskrit). In the process, the dates for the beginning of the vernacularization of literature in general are compared to those for independent Advaita literature in various Indian vernacular languages. This permits us to test whether or not the processes of vernacularization are concurrent in all forms of literature or whether they differ according to genre. This is followed by a detailed examination of Niścaldās's stance on caste (*jāti*). Niścaldās defends his stance by citing passages from the *Mahābhārata* epic, as well as Śaṅkara's commentary to the *Brahma-sūtra*, thus necessitating a deeper investigation into Śaṅkara's position on caste, as well as that of the *Mahābhārata*, in order to determine if Niścaldās is following tradition or breaking with it and presenting his own innovative interpretations.

The rest of the dissertation, chapters 5 through 9, shifts its focus to Niścaldās's presentation of Advaita Vedānta in his *VP*. For Niścaldās, the composition of his works was not a mere scholastic exercise but a direct expression of his values. Hence, we will gain further insight into Niścaldās's mindset and the influence it had on his choice to compose his works in the vernacular. In this text, Niścaldās raises three questions pertaining to the concept of a *vyrtti* ("mental modification by which cognition takes place"): 1) What is a *vyrtti*? 2) What is the cause of a *vyrtti*? 3) What is its purpose? In the process of thoroughly answering these three questions, Niścaldās undertakes a detailed examination of issues regarding Vedānta epistemology,

metaphysics and praxis. Nīścaldās covers much ground in the *VP*, vigorously defending the Advaita perspective against proponents of various opposing schools (*pūrva-pakṣin*), mostly Nyāya, but on occasion also Mīmāṃsā and Buddhism. At first glance, it may appear that he is not covering any new territory compared to his Advaita predecessors. After all, the non-dual Brahman had been written about by Vedāntins for over a millennium prior to Nīścaldās's time. Even the organizational scheme, that of using the concept of a *vṛtti* as a central element around which the precepts of Advaita can be presented, had been undertaken before, by Mahādevānanda (ca. 1600-1700 CE) in his *Tattvānusandhāna*, although only in its second and third of four chapters and nowhere as exhaustively as in the *VP*. Nonetheless, considering how central the concept of *vṛtti* is to Advaita, it is surprising that there are not more texts focused on it, and Nīścaldās's *VP* is an important contribution that helps one understand how, by means of a *vṛtti*, one's cognition relates to the objects about us and thereby constructs the "reality" of one's experience at any level. The same process of *vṛtti*-cognition is also instrumental in realizing one's identity with non-dual Brahman when it becomes a *brahmākāra vṛtti*, a *vṛtti* in the form of Brahman.

Beyond just presenting this material in the vernacular, Nīścaldās's unique contribution is his clear-eyed and uncompromising focus on soteriology, i.e., attaining the knowledge of Brahman, or liberation. In order to facilitate this knowledge of Brahman for his readers, Nīścaldās presents a reorganization of vast swaths of post-Śāṅkara Vedānta tradition and serves as our guide through the Vedānta landscape, pointing out the various different perspectives held by Vedāntins and other schools on key issues along the way, explaining which views are sound and conducive to liberation, and steering us away from those he considers unproductive. The *VP* shows Nīścaldās in dialogue with the Advaita tradition, evaluating, contrasting and, where possible, reconciling various standpoints. On several occasions, after exhaustively analyzing opposing views within the Advaita school, Nīścaldās provides a resolution to the seeming contradictions and concludes that, where the knowledge of Brahman is concerned, while one viewpoint is more doctrinally sound, other viewpoints are also efficacious. While the text is often dense and one may easily get lost in the thickets of argument and counter-argument, Nīścaldās never deviates from his central soteriological objective, namely, gaining knowledge of Brahman, and he steadily works towards that goal throughout the entire text. I suggest that this soteriological focus upon non-duality is ultimately behind Nīścaldās's decision to write in the vernacular, which will

ensure that anyone desirous of attaining the knowledge of Brahman may do so, not just those who know Sanskrit. A close reading of the *VP* will make this quite clear. In the process, other issues such as Nīścaldās's application of the philosophical method in the service of Brahman-realization and his understanding of scripture will also be revealed. What follows is a highly abridged overview of the *VP* text.

The short answer to the first question, “What is a *vr̥tti*?” is that *vr̥ttis* facilitate cognition. This leads to detailed discussion of the six accepted means of cognition (*pramāṇa*) in Vedānta, which is presented in chapter 5. In answering the second question, “What is the cause of a *vr̥tti*?” Nīścaldās describes the two types of cognition, direct and valid (*pramā*) and indirect (*apramā*), and their further typology; this is also presented in chapter 5. Indirect cognitions can be false, and in chapter 6, we examine Nīścaldās's presentation of the Advaita view of superimposition (*adhyāsa*), which is held to be the cause of erroneous cognition. Chapter 6 also contains a discussion of the Advaita theory of erroneous cognition (*anirvacanīya-khyāti-vāda*), namely, the theory that the object of erroneous cognition is logically indeterminate (*anirvacanīya*), which is followed by the presentation and refutation of five other theories of erroneous cognition. In the course of refuting these theories, an objection is raised on behalf of the Mīmāṃsakas that if one has doubts regarding the validity (*pramāṭva*) of any given cognition, one will not engage in any definite activity (*pravṛtti*). In effect, if one does not trust the validity of one's own cognitions, one might be reluctant to commit to any action based on these cognitions. In chapter 7, Nīścaldās addresses the inapplicability of this objection to Advaita, by analyzing the nature of validity and invalidity. With this, both the first question, concerning types of cognition, and the second question, concerning the cause of *vr̥ttis* begun at the end of chapter 5, are answered.

Next, and still in chapter 7, we see Nīścaldās begin his answer to the third question, “What is the purpose of a *vr̥tti*?” In brief, although a *vr̥tti* can also result in false cognitions (as seen in chapter 5), the primary purpose of a *vr̥tti* is the cessation (*nivṛtti*) of ignorance (*ajñāna*). The ignorance can be at the empirical level or it can be the ignorance of one's self as Brahman. To thoroughly understand this, Nīścaldās embarks on an examination of the locus of ignorance: is it the individual being (*jīva*), is it Īśvara (the theistic creator) or is it elsewhere? Nīścaldās presents the principal Advaita views on the locus of ignorance and the relation of consciousness to erroneous cognitions, the differences between these various views, and ways in which these views may be reconciled. In chapter 8, we take up Nīścaldās's continuing examination of

ignorance, as it manifests in the empirical sphere as well as in the dream state. Chapter 8 also contains a discussion of the nature of reality (*sattā*) versus illusoriness (*mithyātva*) and a repudiation of the reality of the manifest world (*prapañca*). Next, Niścaldās takes up the means to dispel this illusoriness, discussing the utility of action (karma) and renunciation (*sannyāsa*) in effecting knowledge as proposed by various Advaita thinkers. He also discusses the eligibility of non-brahman castes for self-realization. Chapter 9 presents Niścaldās's return to the third question, "What is the purpose of a *vr̥tti*?" which he states is to bring about the cessation of ignorance through Brahman-realization (*tattva-jñāna*). Niścaldās explores the nature of this *vr̥tti*, what happens once it occurs, the means for effecting Brahman-realization, and whether or not the realization is immediate. Niścaldās suggests that a *vr̥tti* is the cause of an individual's (*jīva*) experience of the cycle of life-death-rebirth (*saṃsāra*) by relating the individual to the three states (waking, dreaming, and deep sleep). A different *vr̥tti* is the cause of the attainment of liberation. Different arguments regarding the nature of the cessation of what was conceived (*kalpita*), namely, *saṃsāra*, are considered before Niścaldās presents his view, and his conclusion.

The final chapter of the dissertation, chapter 10, consolidates the findings of the preceding chapters and reviews the evidence from the *VP* that supports the assertion that Niścaldās's uncompromising Advaita perspective and clear-eyed, primary focus on soteriological efficacy is behind his decision to write in the vernacular. Chapter 10 also explores whether the *VP* as we have it is a complete text or whether it was left unfinished by Niścaldās's sudden death. Niścaldās holds the Advaita position that there is only one consciousness (*ekamātra*) and, apart from it, the entire creation (*prapañca*) is false. I review examples of Niścaldās's reconciliation of seemingly conflicting doctrinal interpretations and of his use of the stratagem of *prauḍhi-vāda*, the temporary acceptance of the opponents' view in the process of refuting their objections to one's own view. Niścaldās's matter-of-fact acceptance of the theories that there is only one individual being (*eka-jīva-vāda*) and that perception is creation (*dr̥ṣṭi-sṛṣṭi-vāda*, DSV) is presented as further evidence of his clear and uncompromising Advaita perspective that dictates his decision to write in the vernacular. The implications of Niścaldās's novel contributions to the understanding of the Advaita problem of the nature of the cessation of ignorance and of the means for achieving Brahman-realization are also considered. In both cases he gives precedence to scripture and the experience of wise, liberated persons over reason, and deprecates the misuse

of reason when scripture and the Advaita tradition is disregarded. I also examine Niścaldās's pragmatic stance that, since the goal of Advaita is the demonstration of the unreality of the created world (*prapañca*), even an incorrect view may help achieve the same end. Such pragmatism and Niścaldās's radical views on the eligibility for liberation are contrasted with his otherwise conservative stance elsewhere, such as his criticism of attempts to contort the purport of the divinely revealed Vedas (*śruti*) through humanly contrived tools of logic (*yukti-samudāya*). Niścaldās's use of reason in the service of revelation, his view of revelation, and his relation to the overall Advaita tradition are examined, and it is stressed that, for Niścaldās and Advaita, philosophy is always in the service of theology mediated by scripture. Lastly, proposals for future exploration of Niścaldās's ideas are presented.

2 Niścaldās's Life and Patronage

Swāmī Niścaldās (1791-1863 CE) is highly regarded within indigenous Vedānta circles. He wrote three works on Advaita Vedānta: the popular and widely available *Vicārsāgar* (*VS*), “The Ocean of Contemplation,” the philosophically erudite *Vṛttiprabhākar* (*VP*), “The Illuminator of *Vṛttis*,⁸” and the lesser-known *Yuktiprakāś* (*YP*), “The Light of Analogical Reasoning.” All are written in Hindi. These works are distinctive in their originality and relative contemporaneity, the most recent, *VP*, being barely 150 years old. To understand Niścaldās's motivations to write in *bhāṣā* (vernacular) Hindi, we need to piece together his history and biography from all available sources, including prefatory matter to earlier published editions of his works. This chapter undertakes a review of these sources of Niścaldās's biography and describes what is learned about his life and his surviving works, with particular attention to key events that might have influenced his choice to write in the vernacular. We also look at the historical background of Rājā Rāmsiṃha, of Būndī, a patron of Niścaldās, to better understand what, if any, influence the Rājā had on Niścaldās's choice to write in the vernacular.

2.1 Biographical Sources

To separate fact from hypebole, let us review the sources regarding Niścaldās's biography in chronological order. The oldest available source of biographical information about Niścaldās is Viṭṭhalaśāstrī's *Sādhū Niścaldāsji kā Jīvan-caritra*, “Biography of Sādhū Niścaldās,” which is found in the second edition of Niścaldās's *Yuktiprakāś* (1899). Viṭṭhalaśāstrī acknowledges that this account itself is taken from another source, which is not available to me for consultation.⁹ This raises at the outset a recurring question faced in determining the facts about Niścaldās: What is the source of these accounts? The next oldest account of Niścaldās's life is given in Pt. Pītāmbār's (1917) introduction¹⁰ to the first edition of *Vicārsāgar*. The author states that he

⁸ The term *vṛtti* is deliberately being left untranslated for now. It will be described more thoroughly in Ch. 5, p. 101.

⁹ Viṭṭhalaśāstrī (11n1): “*yaha jīvan-caritra rā° rā° manaḥsukhrām sūryarām tripāthī ke vicārsāgar meṃ se liyā hai*. This biography is taken from Rā. Rā. Manaḥsukhrām Sūryarām Tripāthī's *Vicārsāgar*.” The Cambridge University Library lists an 1874 edition of *Vicārsāgar* by Manasukharama Suryarama Tripathi [*sic*] in Marathi. Based on the year of publication being only eleven years after Niścaldās's death, one may suspect that this is actually a Hindi edition which has been miscataloged, though I have not had an opportunity to view this volume. Kapil (2005, 246-47n^{11a}) also indicates that Tripāthī's work is in Hindi.

¹⁰ The introduction is signed *prasiddhakartā*, “publisher” (lit. “one who makes famous”), and there is an internal reference to a *mahāpuruṣ*, “learned man” which is glossed as Pt. Pītāmbār (9n1). From this it would appear that the author of this introduction is someone other than Pt. Pītāmbār. But it is more likely that the footnote was a later addition. The author also makes reference to the *anukramaṇikā*, table of contents, created by him(self) and also the *ṭīkā*, commentary, which he provides to the *mangalācaraṇa dohās*, invocatory couplets. These *ṭīkās* are attributed to Pt. Pītāmbār by others, e.g., Dādū (1994, 1-7). Therefore, I too have attributed this introduction to Pt. Pītāmbār.

intended to write the complete biography of Nīscaldās but because he could not obtain the means (*sādhana*) to do so, he has presented whatever he has heard.¹¹ Once again, the sources for “whatever he has heard” are not given. We then face a gap of almost forty years before the third account of Nīscaldās's life, provided by Svāmī Mangaldās (1955) in Nigamānand's edition of *Vicārsāgar* (Nīscaldās 1967). Svāmī Mangaldās was the director of the Dādū Mahāvidyālaya, Jaipur, at that time, and thus, it is to be expected that his account will have a sectarian perspective since Nīscaldās was a notable member of the Dādū Panth. But he too does not mention any sources for the events he narrates. Another account from the same period, that of Lakṣminārāyaṇ Copṛā (1956) in the introductory sections of his edition of Nīscaldās's *Yukti prakāś*, is cited by two subsequent authors, Siṃha (1981) and Kapil (2005), but I have not been able to locate it.

The first non-sectarian account on Nīscaldās is found in Paraśurām Caturvedī's *Uttarī Bhārat Kī Sant-paramparā*, “The Saint Tradition of North India” (1964, 514-16); it also lacks any citation of sources regarding Nīscaldās's biographical details. In 1978-79, the Dādūpanthī Svāmī Nārāyaṇdās provides the most detailed account regarding Nīscaldās in his *Dādū Panth Paricay*, “Information about the Dādū Panth” (Nārāyaṇdās 1978-9, 2:834-56, 3:759-64). Vol. 2 includes a section that provides exhaustive details about Nīscaldās's life, and more briefly, about his written works, while vol. 3 discusses his written works at greater length. This account has a decidedly hagiographic nature. Nārāyaṇdās acknowledges elsewhere that he “relied on lore he was able to remember personally or draw out from his wide circle of Dadu-panthī acquaintances” (Gold 1994, 260n3), presumably including Svāmī Mangaldās. One has to keep in mind that these recollections come over a century after Nīscaldās's death. The first full-length study of Nīscaldās was a ninety-nine page monograph by Raṅjīt Siṃha (1981). Sources for some of the details are mentioned, including Caturvedī, with accompanying evaluations of disparate accounts to determine which are most probable. But more often, Siṃha presents the details as accepted fact without any mention of their provenance. Over a decade later, Sūratrām Dādū (1994) edited a version of *Vicārsāgar* in which he presents details about Nīscaldās gathered from various

¹¹ *is graṃth ke kartā śrī nīscaldāsī kī saṃpūrnā janma-caritra iske sāthi likhanaikā merā vicār thā, paraṃtu aiṃsai sādhan kī aprāpti honaitaiṃ jo kachuka mere śravaṇamaiṃ āyā hai, so ihāṃ likhūṃ hūṃ* (Pītāmbār 1917, 6).

sources, including Caturvedī,¹² Nārāyaṇdās, and Raṇjīt Sīṃha mentioned earlier. Sūratrām Dādū is much more meticulous at citing his sources and makes every attempt to present differing views from various sources and to determine which version is most likely. The final independent work on Nīścaldās by Indu Bālā Kapil (2005) is also a full length work providing references to most of these sources discussed thus far, excluding the works of Nārāyaṇdās and Sūratrām Dādū.

These temporal and factual relationships are represented stemmatically in Figure 1 below, with the temporal dimension represented vertically with the oldest sources at the top. The dashed arrows in the figure denote inferred dependencies on sources which do not cite *their* sources, and

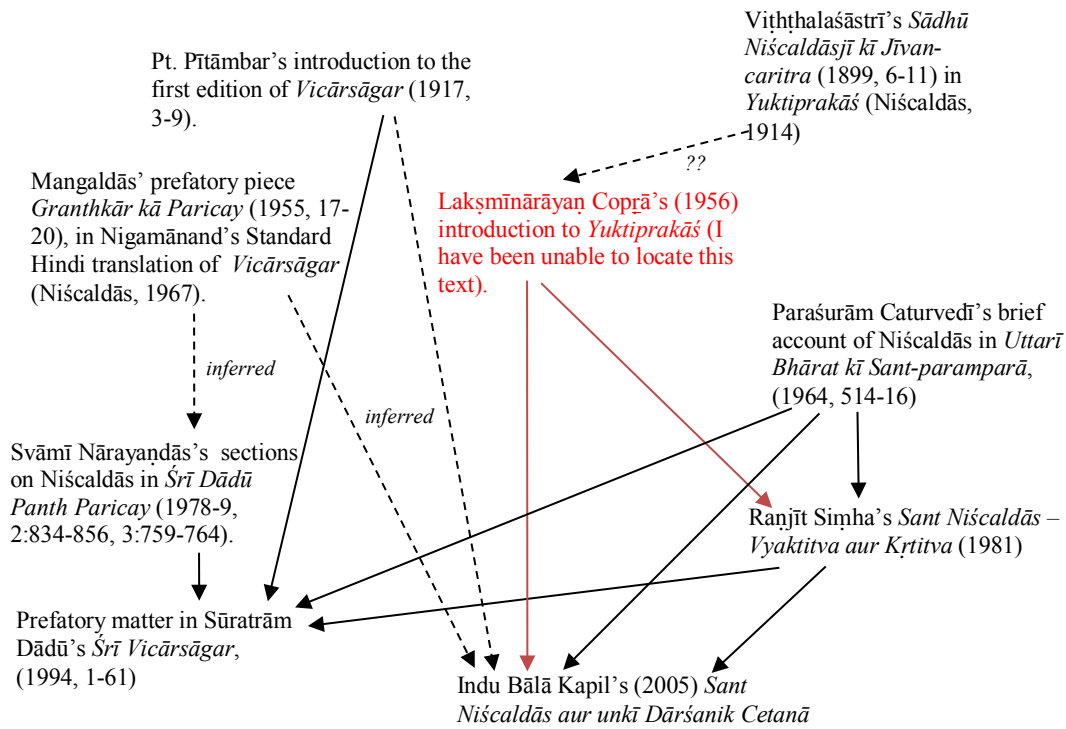


Figure 1: Stemmatic Relationship of Sources for Nīścaldās's Biography

the solid arrows represent dependencies that are cited. Any schematic representation is necessarily a simplification, since each author undoubtedly relied on sources that are not represented here. This figure attempts to capture the major recurring sources. From the nineteen-

¹² Dādū refers to an article by Caturvedī published in a periodical called *Sant-vāṇī*, Sept. 1989 issue (1994, 23n). The details presented from this article do not seem different from the section in Caturvedī (1964) and for our purpose the 1964 version can be considered as Dādū's source.

sixties onwards, several other texts¹³ refer to Niścaldās but do not offer any new or verifiable evidence.

Since many of these works were written over a century after the death of Niścaldās in 1863, many of the facts presented are not verifiable. Although they may be ultimately based on hearsay, there is no other data available. Only the three most recent accounts, those by Siṃha (1981), Sūratrām Dādū (1994) and Kapil (2005) cite their sources, but even these do not do so rigorously. To their credit, all three are aware that their sources may be based on hearsay, and they attempt to corroborate details through multiple sources; for example, when Sūratrām Dādū cites information from Nārāyaṇdās's *Dādū Panth Paricay*, he attempts to corroborate it with other sources. Some works not included in the stemma in Figure 1 were less rigorous. For example, the foreword to a Modern Hindi translation of *Vicārsāgar*, by Camanlāl Gautam, boldly states that Niścaldās (1791-1863) and Tulsīdās (1532-1623), the author of the *Rāmcaritmānas*, were coterminous, ignoring the intervening two and a half centuries (Niścaldās 2001, 4).¹⁴ This author may have taken Dādū Dayāl (1544-1603), whom Niścaldās repeatedly invokes in his works, as Niścaldās's direct guru. Siṃha judiciously clarifies that there was another Sant Tulsīdās (ca. 1788-1843), a resident of Hāthras.¹⁵ Sūratrām Dādū traces Niścaldās's teaching lineage (*guru paramparā*) back to Dādū Dayāl. He relies upon the *Dādū Panth Paricay*, which states that Niścaldās was a ninth-generation disciple.¹⁶ Allowing 25 years per generation, one falls short of accounting for the intervening two hundred years between Dādū's death in 1603 and Niścaldās's initiation (*dīkṣā*) in 1805, as there are only seven generations between Dādū and Niścaldās, getting us to 1778.¹⁷

¹³ For example, Ram Sarup Joon (1967), Dharm Pal (1968), Shashi Bhushan Singhal (1971), Ram Kumar Bhardwaj (1983), Nonica Datta (1999).

¹⁴ “*sādhu niścaldāsī rāmcarit mānas ke racayitā mahātmā tulsīdās ke samakālīn the.*” Viṭṭhalaśāstrī may be the source of this “fact”: “*usī samaya vedāntaśāstra pāraṃgata śrīmad-rāmaḥbhakta tulsīdāsī bhī kāsī meṃ rahate the.* At the same time, Tulsīdās, the devotee of Rāma, who was unexcelled in Vedānta, also was living in Benares” (1899, 8-9).

¹⁵ Even Pt. Pītāmbhar was aware of this difference: “*śrī-kāśī-jī-maiṃ bhāṣā-rāmāyaṇ-ke karttā-saiṃ vilakṣaṇ mahātmā śrī-tulasīdās-jī...*, a sage named Tulsīdās in Benares, different from the author of the vernacular Rāmāyaṇa...” (1917, 7).

¹⁶ According to Nārāyaṇdās, the lineage is 1) Dādū Dayāl, 2) Banvārī Dās, 3) Chabīl Dās, 4) Śyām Dās, 5) Nārāyaṇ Dās, 6) Har Bhakta, 7) Alakhrām, 8) Amardās, 9) Niścaldās. (1978-9, 2:823,833-4).

¹⁷ From Dādū Dayāl's death in 1603, eight more generations at twenty-five years each (on average) brings us to 1803 when Niścaldās would be twelve years old, and he is said to have got his *dīkṣā* at the age of fourteen. The only problem with this scenario is that Niścaldās is the eighth generation *after* Dādū. Perhaps there were some long-reigning intervening *mahants*, as Sūratrām Dādū (1994, 27-28) suggests. The *Dādū Panth Paricay* doesn't consistently, or chronologically, give such details. Alternatively, one must posit an average of twenty-nine years per generation, to make the numbers work out, which is not unreasonable, considering Dādū himself lived for fifty-nine years, and Niścaldās for seventy-two.

2.2 Early Life

Although Niścaldās's exact year of birth is not known, he is reported to have been born in either Saṃvat 1848 or 49 (1791 or 92 CE) in Dhanāṇā, Dist. Hisār in Haryana, in a Jāt family of the Dahiyā sub-caste (*gotra*).¹⁸ He was an only child, and his birth name was Agaṛī (Kapil 2005, 23) or Angari (Datta 1999, 40). His mother passed away when Niścaldās was young. In 1805, when a drought struck the area, Niścaldās's father, Mukta/Muktā took the thirteen- or fourteen-year-old Niścaldās to Delhi, where the father searched for work. They stayed at the Dādūpanthī center (*akhārā*) near the Bhavānī Shankar Chattā in the Khārī Bāvṛī bazaar, where Niścaldās learned how to read and write (Mangaldās 1955, 17; Siṃha 1981, 4-5). (At present, there is a Khārī Bāvṛī Road near Jama Masjid and Chandnī Chowk). The Dādūpanthī head, either Swami Alakhrām (Mangaldās 1955, 17), or Amardās (Viṭṭhalaśāstrī 1899, 17; Siṃha 1981, 5), was impressed by Niścaldās's intelligence and convinced his father to turn him over to their care.¹⁹ At this time, he was given his initiatory (*dīkṣā*) name, Niścaldās, which follows Sanskrit phonology, instead of the vernacular (*bhāṣā*) Nihācal/Nehācaldās, but was nonetheless preserved by Niścaldās throughout his works.²⁰ According to Nārāyaṇdās, Niścaldās's father also took initiation (*dīkṣā*) some time later and eventually became an ascetic (*sādhū*).²¹

¹⁸ Siṃha (1981, 2) cites Lakṣminārāyaṇa Copṛā as the source for the Saṃvat 1849 date (1792 CE). Nārāyaṇdās also gives the same year, specifically Śrāvaṇa Kṛṣṇa 8 (1978-9, 2:833). Siṃha cites the *VS* edition published by Udāsīna Saṃskṛta Vidyālaya as the source for the Saṃvat 1848 date (1791 CE). Sūratrām Dādū (1994, 26-7) also explores the possibility of Saṃvat 1847 proposed by Svāmī Dvārakādās of Kāśī, but rejects it for lack of evidence. See also Datta (1999, 40), Kapil (2005, 21, 23-4), Maṅgaldās (1955, 17). Siṃha (2-3) also reports three other places reported as Niścaldās's birthplace: 1) Kihāḍhauli, dist. Sonipat, 2) Kūṅgaḍ, Dist. Hisar per Caturvedī (1964, 514), and 3) Delhi, and provides reasons why they are not likely.

¹⁹ According to Nārāyaṇdās (1978-9, 2:434), Niścaldās received his initiation (*dīkṣā*) from Amardās. This practice of initiating young children prevails even in the present. When I visited Dādū Pālka in Narenā in 2006, I was told by Rām Jīvan Kumāvat's grandfather that his grandson, age perhaps nine, had been turned over to the order by his family. Orr (1947, 221-2), too, mentions that adoption was a common means for the Dādū Panth to add to its ranks.

²⁰ Sūratrām Dādū (1994, 25-6) concludes that this meant Niścaldās liked his given name, but it just as well could be the stylistic flourish of poets mentioning their own name in their works as a *chāp* (signature).

²¹ Nārāyaṇdās: *Muktajī bhī sthān meṃ rahkar sthān kī sevā karne lage aur kuch samay paścāt ve bhī guru dīkṣā lekar sādhū ho gaye the* (1978-9, 834).

2.3 Advanced Studies



Figure 2: Assī Ghāt in Benares (Sundardās 1978, 55)

Nīscaldās was sent to Jalandhar, Punjab for studies, and possibly also to Kapūrthalā, Lahore and Amritsar and then eventually in 1806-7 to Benares (Kapil 2005, 24; Siṃha 1981, 6).²² Because Nīscaldās was of the Jāt kṣatriya caste, pandits were not prepared to teach him Sanskrit, so when he arrived in Benares he passed himself off as a brahman (Caturvedī 1964, 514-5). The experience of caste discrimination in the pursuit of knowledge, and of having to lie to circumvent it would have profound consequences for him. He stayed at the Dādū Maṭh at Assī Ghāt (see Figure 2)²³ where he studied the Vedas, Sanskrit grammar (*vyākaraṇa*), Nyāya and Vedānta. At Viśuddhānanda's ashram (Viṭṭhalaśāstrī 1899, 7), he studied meter (*chanda-śāstra*) with Dasapuñjajī (Siṃha 1981, 6) and/or Rasapuñjajī (Caturvedī 1964, 515; Kapil 2005, 25), grammar and philosophy (*ṣaṭ-śāstra*) with the *Ātmapurāṇa* commentator (*tīkākār*) Śrī Kākārām, and

²² Datta mentions that he was accompanied by a friend, Swarupanand, but it is not clear if only up to Punjab or also to Benares (1999, 40). Handa writes: "Impressed by his prodigal [*sic*] intelligence, the head priest arranged for Nischal Das's higher Sanskrit education first at Jullundur and then at Kashi" (1978, 107).

²³ A Dādūpanthī predecessor, Sundardās, also stayed at the Assī Ghāt, ca. 1606-25 CE (Sundardās 1978, 2:55). Hastings (2002, 26n30) mentions that this *maṭh* had been "long abandoned" but was "currently being renovated by the Dadu Dayalu Mahasabha."

Nyāya with Dāmodar Śāstrī (Viṭṭhalaśāstrī 1899, 8; Nārāyaṇdās 1978-9, 2:834-6; Siṃha 1981, 5-6; Kapil 2005, 25),²⁴ and also in Nadiyā, Bengal (Caturvedī 1964, 515; Siṃha 1981, 6). He is said to have had total recall of everything he heard (Nārāyaṇdās 1978-9, 2:834),²⁵ and a good command of *vyākaraṇa* (Siṃha 1981, 5-6). At the conclusion of *Vicārsāgar*, he writes:

*sāṃkhya nyāya meṃ śrama kiyo, paṛhi vyākaraṇa aseṣa,
paṛhai grantha advaita ke, rahyo na ekahu seṣa;
kaṭhina ju aura nibandha haiṃ, jinameṃ mata ke bheda,
śrama tai avagāhana kiye, niścaldāsā saveda (VS vv. 7.111-2).*

I toiled in the study of Sāṅkhya, Nyāya and learned grammar completely,
[I] studied Advaita texts, not even one is left [unstudied].
Other difficult compendia, which have differences of opinion,
[I,] Niścaldās have sweated and laboriously immersed myself in them all.

By various accounts, Niścaldās was an intelligent, eloquent and good-looking man, medium-complexioned, tall and thin (Viṭṭhalaśāstrī 1899, 11; Mangaldās 1955, 18; Siṃha 1981, 9; Kapil 2005, 27).²⁶ Siṃha verified that this description of his build was consistent with his clothes preserved at his residence (*gurudvāra*) in Kihāraulī. He also is said to have a tobacco and hookah habit,²⁷ crooked, protruding teeth, and a serious, thoughtful appearance (Mangaldās 1955, 18; Nārāyaṇdās 1978-9, 2:850).²⁸ Sūratrām Dādū (1994 iv, 21) includes a representation of Niścaldās, courtesy of Mahāmaṇḍaleśvar Svāmī Āśānand of Haridwar (Figure 4).

²⁴ Nārāyaṇdās (1978-9, 2:834-36) (1978-9, 2:834-36) only mentions Kākārām.

²⁵ Nārāyaṇdās: *Niścaldāsji kī smaraṇ śakti bahut acchī thī. ek bār sunkar do bār uccāraṇ karne se pāṭh unko kaṇṭhastha ho jātā thā.*

²⁶ Viṭṭhalaśāstrī: *Niścaldāsji kī śarīr kṛś thā, paṃca keś (spread locks/tresses?) dhāraṇ kiye the, mukh kī ākār lamba va gol thā....* Mangaldās: *Niścaldās jī kī varṇa pakkā thā, ve na to gaurva[r]ṇa the na śyām. Kad unkā lambā thā. Śarīr ikharā thā. Siṃha: raṃg-rūp kharāb na hokar acchā hī thā ... vah [sic] kad meṃ lambe tathā śarīr se duble-patle the. Kapil: ek pratibhāśālī vyaktitva, vilakṣaṇa vāk-śakti, gaur-varṇa, suḍaul evaṃ śārīrik dṛṣṭi se sudarśan the.*

²⁷ Apparently, the last *mahant*, Rāmānand, had in his possession a silver hookah (*rajanālī*) but the prevailing belief by then was that Niścaldās didn't smoke (Kapil 2005, 31).

²⁸ Mangaldās: *Dānt kuch baḍe the aur muṃh khulne par hoṭhoṃ se bāhar dikhāī dete the. unko tambākū pīne kī abhyās thā, isliye ve naydār hukkā pīyā [sic] karte the. Nārāyaṇdās: āpkā mukh-maṇḍal gaṃbhīr vicār mudrā yukt rahtā thā. Dānt kuch nikle huye the. Pāc keś (spread locks/tresses?) rakhte the.*

It is standard hagiographic practise to describe the subject's appearance favorably, but the authors may also provide these details about his appearance to explain why one of Niścaldās's teachers (Pt. Kākārām, according to Nārāyaṇdās) wished to give his daughter in marriage to Niścaldās. When Niścaldās revealed his true *jāti* and moreover, that he was a Dādūpanthī, his guru is said to have cursed him. All other sources consulted, except Pt. Pītāmbhar and Viṭṭhalaśāstrī, mention this episode, with some variations.²⁹ According to Caturvedī, he was cursed that he'd have to marry twice (1964, 515). According to Siṃha's research, however, there is no evidence that Niścaldās ever married (1981, 7-9). Two other accounts mention that

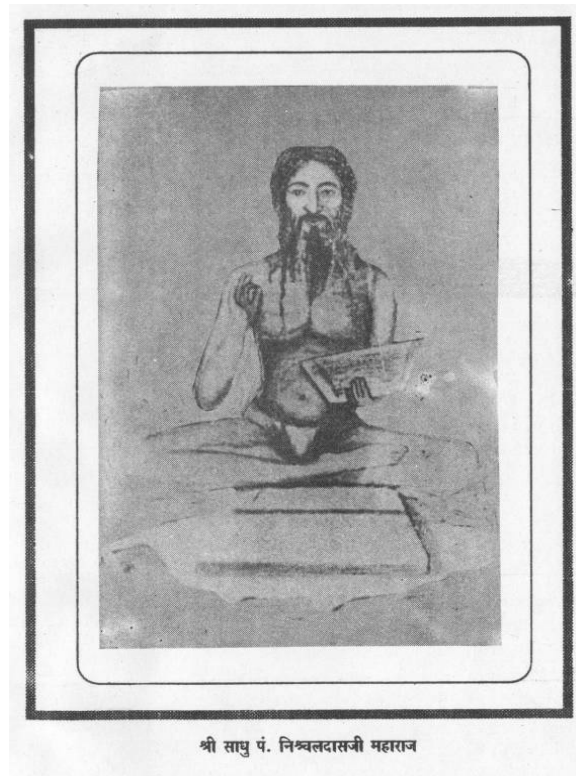


Figure 3: Representation of Niścaldās

Niścaldās was cursed by his teacher that he would henceforth remain tormented by fever, and Niścaldās duly suffered an hour or two daily (Mangaldās 1955, 18; Nārāyaṇdās 1978-9, 2:837).³⁰ Siṃha suggests that this stimulated Niścaldās's interest in Ayurveda in search of an antidote. Niścaldās is held to have written a work on Ayurveda and "gained fame by curing the diseased"

²⁹ Viṭṭhalaśāstrī only mentions that Niścaldās was afflicted by fever, *śarīr meṃ jvar kī pīḍā thī* (1899, 11).

³⁰ Mangaldās: *jāo tum janmabhar santapta rahoge*. Nārāyaṇdās: *is mithyā bhāṣaṇ ke phal rūp meṃ tum ko prati din ek ghaṇṭā jvar āyā karegā*. The Mangaldās account subsequently has Niścaldās suffering a fever daily for two hours. Siṃha (1981, 8-9) and Kapil (2005, 27) reproduce these per Mangaldās (uncredited by Siṃha).

(Datta 1999, 40). To this day, many Dādūpanthīs engage in Ayurveda practices. Siṃha also narrates a second curse, based on hearsay (*janaśruti*), stating that Nīscaldās's learning would only bear fruit when engaged in religio-philosophical debate (*śāstrārtha*), and that none of the successors from his lineage would ever become learned (*vidvān*). We must keep this in mind when we consider Nīscaldās's lineage in section 2.7.

According to the hagiographic account in *Dādū Panth Paricay*, Nīscaldās was visited later in his life by a Dādūpanthī *sant* (holy man), who was very pleased with Nīscaldās's knowledge of Vedānta. Seeing Nīscaldās suffering from the fever and learning the cause of it, he told Nīscaldās that if he recited the Dādū Vāṇī daily this fever would stop afflicting him within a few days. Nīscaldās is said to have started doing so immediately and was freed from his affliction. As a result his faith in the Dādū Vāṇī increased greatly (Nārāyaṇdās 1978-9, 2:837).

2.4 Post-Benares

After 20 to 25 years, sometime between 1826-32, Nīscaldās left Benares (Viṭṭhalaśāstrī 1899, 9; Mangaldās 1955, 17; Nārāyaṇdās 1978-9, 2:836; Siṃha 1981, 8-9; Dādū 1994, 34; Kapil 2005, 28).³¹ He is said to have collected (and perhaps even memorized) 2.7 million Sanskrit *ślokas* while studying there (Pītāmbār 1917, 7).³² The depth of his knowledge and mastery had been recognized in Benares, and Kapil suggests that this raised feelings of jealousy and hatred towards him, causing him eventually to return to the Dādū Panth center (*akhārā*) in Delhi. However, its then head, who was less learned than Nīscaldās, was threatened by his learning and worried that he would lose his students to him. He treated Nīscaldās with arrogance (Kapil 2005, 28),³³ and eventually Nīscaldās left to settle in Kiḥaulī (present day Kiḥaulī, Dist. Rohtak, Haryana) (Nischaladasa 1885, 404; Orr 1947, 215; Singhal 1971, 33).³⁴ He was given twenty *bīghā*-s³⁵ of land for his ashram by his followers and established a teaching residence (*gurudvāra*), a school (*pāṭhśālā*) and a library there (Kapil 2005, 28). Datta claims that the

³¹ Mangaldās: 20 years; Siṃha and Viṭṭhalaśāstrī: duration not provided; Dādū: 25 years, after Nārāyaṇdās; Kapil: 20-22 years.

³² *śrī-kāśījī maiṃ rahike śrī-nīscaldāsīnai vidyā ke 27 lakṣa saṃskṛta-ślokan kā saṃgraha kiṃ thā.*

³³ *adhikārī mahātmā ne inke sāth uddamḍatā kā vyavahār śurū kar diyā.*

³⁴ Lala Sreeram gives the name as Kehrowli (Nischaladasa 1885, 404). Orr (1947, 215) calls it Kirdoli, Singhal (1971, 33), Kindoli, Datta, Kehrauli (1999, 40). It is also known as Kiḥaulī. (Dādū 1995, 18). As of Nov. 2012, the village shows up on Google Maps as Pehlādpur-Kirholi, Haryana. In October 2008, I had the good fortune to locate and visit Kiḥaulī with the help of three *mahants* of the Dādū community: Arvind Svāmī, *mahant* of the Kalānaur *ḍerā*, (dist. Bhivānī, Haryana), Rām Prakāś Śāstrī, *mahant* of the Kāhnaur *ḍerā* (dist. Rohtak, Haryana), and Arjun Dās Svāmī, *mahant* of the Bagaḥ *ḍerā*, (dist. Jhunjhunūṃ, Rajasthan).

³⁵ A *bīghā* is anywhere from a quarter to five-eighths of an acre, depending on whether it is *kaccā*, provisional or *sarkārī*, official.

pāṭhśālā was opened “as an alternative to brahminical institutions” (1999, 41). The present day government high school is situated on the site of this original *pāṭhśālā*. In Pt. Pītāmbār’s time (early twentieth century), Nīścaldās’s lineage was still prevalent, and a collection of his texts was preserved there (Nīścaldās 1917b, 328n553).³⁶ These sites continued to be active at least through 1964 (Caturvedī 1964, 516),³⁷ and it appears that Raṇjīt Siṃha met Rāmānand, who was the religious head (*mahant*) there prior to 1981 (17). However, by Sūratrām Dādū’s visit in 1991, no one was living there, and everyone was said to have moved to Rāmpurā near Delhi (1994, 18; Kapil 2005, 31).³⁸

Nīścaldās is said to have taught Vedānta, Nyāya and *vyākaraṇa* and to have received many scholars who wished to study with him. Pt. Pītāmbār mentions that Nīścaldās would teach Nyāya and non-Vedānta texts at times other than in the morning, saying that he refused to teach texts that propagate something other than *ātmā* (*anātmā*) early in the day (1917, 6).³⁹ In the final verses of his work *Vicārsāgar*, which was written in Kihaṛaulī, he writes:

*Dillī taiṃ paścima diśā, kosa aṭhāraha gāma;
Tāmaiṃ yaha pūro bhayau, Kihaṛaulī tihi nāma. (VS v. 7.115)*

Eighteen *kos* [approximately 36 miles] east of Delhi,
There is a village named Kihaṛaulī, this [text] was completed there.

2.5 Patronage

By 1843, Nīścaldās’s fame had spread, and in that year he received an invitation from King Rāmsiṃha to visit him in Būndī, Rajasthan, but was unable to go (Siṃha 1981, 10). After receiving a second invitation, written in Sanskrit and unambiguously dated to 1856 CE, Nīścaldās went to Būndī (Siṃha 1981, 10). The traditionalist royal pandits in Rāmsiṃha’s court were hostile to Nīścaldās since he was not a brahman, and they tried to turn the king against him. However, Rāmsiṃha, who wanted to learn Vedānta from Nīścaldās, was not swayed. The rājā kept Nīścaldās with him for quite a while (Mangaldās 1955, 19), and adjudicated a religio-

³⁶ *tahām adyāpi unkī śiṣyaśākhā bī hai. unhoṃnai jo graṇth saṃgraha kiye the ve bī tahām vidyamān haiṃ.*

³⁷ ... *inkī śiṣya-paramparā tathā pāṭhśālā āj bhī cal rahī hai.*

³⁸ Kapil reports: *vartamān (Janvarī, 2005) sthiti meṃ kihaṛaulī sthit gurudvārā, gurugaddī, āśram aur pustakālay nām kī koī vastu nahīṃ hai.* Rāmpurā is a suburb of Delhi, approx. 10 km. northwest of New Delhi. I was able to confirm this when I visited Mrs. Rāmānand in Kihaṛaulī in 2010, and I also spoke over the phone with her son who resides in Rāmpurā.

³⁹ *koī prabhātmaiṃ nyāyādi parhne āvai tiskū nahīṃ parhāvte the au kahte the jo prabhātmaiṃ anātmā (dvait) ke pratipādaka-granthankū ham nahīṃ parhāvaiṃge.* The earlier part of the day is held to have more of the *sattva* attribute, and as the day progresses, the *tamas* attribute starts to increase. Hence it is considered more effective to study important topics earlier in the day, when the mind is more receptive, and to consign study of lesser matters to later in the day.

philosophical debate (*śāstrārtha*) between all the pandits in his court with Niścaldās. Niścaldās was able to meet their challenges and was victorious (Siṃha 1981, 10-11).⁴⁰ Rāmsiṃha, his wife and family became Niścaldās's disciples (Mangaldās 1955, 19; Pītāmbār 1917, 12; Viṭṭhalaśāstrī 1899, 10).⁴¹ Although they invited him back to Būndī after this initial visit, Niścaldās apparently was never able to return. Rāmsiṃha did meet with Niścaldās again in 1862 in Delhi, as is once again corroborated by a letter written in Sanskrit by the king to Niścaldās and reproduced by Siṃha (1981, 11) and Nārāyaṇdās (1978-9, 2:847-50).

2.6 Death

A year after Rājā Rāmsiṃha's visit, Niścaldās planned a pilgrimage to the Ganga, but suddenly fell ill and passed away in 1863, after being unable to move for fifteen days or not being able to consume any food for a further ten days. His last rites were performed at the Nigambodh Ghāṭ in Delhi, on the banks of the Yamuna river. The ceremonies lasted for seven days and were attended by thousands and accompanied by great fanfare (Siṃha 1981, 12).⁴² A month later, a festival (*melā*) was held in Kihaṛaulī. In a letter reporting Niścaldās's last days, written in *bhāṣā* Hindi by Niścaldās's successor Dayārām, Rājā Rāmsiṃha was asked to fund another bigger ceremony commemorating Niścaldās (Siṃha 1981, 12-13).

2.7 Successors in the Lineage

Since Niścaldās was unmarried, upon his death he was succeeded by the seniormost of his two disciples, Dayārām. He is said to be of simple nature (*saral svabhāva*), and have written a Hindi text on Ayurveda. By 1896, Dayārām was succeeded by Niścaldās's other disciple, Manīrām, who was a famous physician (*vaidya*). Both Dayārām and Manīrām were Jāṭs. Nārāyaṇdās reports that Manīrām would charge the wealthy (*śrīmān*) for his medical services, but then would spend the money in feeding ascetics (*sādhū*) and holy men (*sant*), distributing clothes to the needy and feeding the poor and hungry, including monkeys and pigeons. When a British tax assessor, hearing of Manīrām's wealth, paid him a visit, he found a long line of poor

⁴⁰ Siṃha reports that the topic of the debate was the repudiation of the *cakrāṃkita sampradāya* (followers of the *dvaita-vedāntin* Madhva and *viśiṣṭādvaitin* Rāmānuja, according to Dayananda Saraswati (1963, 512-3)) and their foolish practice of being announced in broad daylight by preceding *maśāl-dhārīs*, torch-bearers (Ibid., 512-13).

⁴¹ Pt. Pītāmbār: *rājārānī donū tinoṃmaiṃ gurubhāv rakhte the. Śrīniścaldāsīkī saṃgatisaiṃ so rājā paṇḍitī padavikū prāpt bhayā. Mangaldās: ... sab rāj-kuṭumb niścaldās viṣe gurubhāv rakhar unkī ājñā-anusār vartane lagā, aur niścaldās ke kathananusār rāmsiṃha ne satkārya kiya.*

⁴² Niścaldās's successor Dayārām wrote Rājā Rāmsiṃha: *... sāhukār saṃg hāthī do bakhare kā nishān kā 1 ballam 13 paṃkhe 15 ghoḍe koṃvāl 15 maṃḍalī bājā bajāvaṃ vālī thī ...*

receiving food. Upon inspecting Manīrām's accounts and stores, the tax assessor found no wealth and asked Manīrām, "Although you have little wealth, you give away so much. What will you do when you run out?" Manīrām replied, "When it runs out, I too will go join the line of these poor." Hearing this, the tax man was very impressed and returned without assessing him any taxes (1978-9, 2:856-7).

Manīrām passed away in 1921 and was succeeded by Rāmānand, an Ahīr Jāt (Siṃha 1981, 17-18; Nārāyaṇdās 1978-9, 2:856-8), who was the first in Nīscaldās's lineage to become a householder (Siṃha 1981, 8).⁴³ Figure 4 shows him with his wife, son and an unidentified man. (On my visit to Kihaṛaulī, I took a photograph of this picture hanging on the wall inside Mrs. Rāmānand's house). He passed away in 1973 (Nārāyaṇdās 1978-9, 2:858) and is survived by his wife, whom I was fortunate to meet on my visit to Kihaṛaulī (Figure 5). By the time Sūratrām Dādū visited Kihaṛaulī in 1991, no center (*gaddī*, lit. "seat") remained (1994, 19). The family now lives in Rāmpurā, a suburb of Delhi, and only Mrs. Rāmānand visits the property periodically.

Kapil provides a photo of the cremation memorials (*samādhi*) of Nīscaldās, Dayārām and Manīrām in the school (*pāṭhśālā*) in Kihaṛaulī located on the grounds of the Pahlādpur-Kiṛhaulī Government High School (*rājakīya ucca vidyālay*) at the entrance to the village (2005, 31 and dust jacket). During my visit to Kihaṛaulī in 2008, I was informed by Rāmānand's wife that they are just memorials, there are no ashes in them – which may account for their general neglect (Figure 6, photographed by me).

⁴³ Siṃha: *inke kathanānusār sant nīscaldās jī kī gaddī-paramparā meṃ, maiṃ sarvapratham aisā mahant hū jisne vaivāhik jīvan svīkār kiya hai.*

Rāmānand had four sons, of whom two are doctors, one a police official, and the youngest a detached mendicant (*virakta sādhu*), but not connected with this center (*gaddī*).⁴⁴ The eldest son, Dr. Jagdīśvarānand, is of the Yādav (Ahir) *jāti* and practices Ayurveda in the Rāmpurā district of



Figure 4: Rāmānand and His Family, ca. 1950



Figure 5: Mrs. Rāmānand, 2008



Figure 6: *Samādhis* of Nīscaldās, Dayārām and Manīrām

Delhi (Dādū 1994, 19, 24, 60).⁴⁵ When I contacted him by phone in 2008, Jagdīśvarānand was not interested in talking about his father, Nīscaldās or the Dādū Panth.

⁴⁴ Kapil, p. 31: *cauthā jo sabse choṭā, vah apnī grhasthī se duḥkhī hokar virakt sādhu ho gayā hai...*

⁴⁵ Sūratrām Dādū incorrectly indicates that Jagdīśvarānand is Manīrām's son, but based on the other evidence presented above, and corroborated by my visit to Kihaṛaulī, he is Rāmānand's son.

2.8 Works Written by Nīscaldās

Nīscaldās has two well-known works, *Vicārsāgar* (*VS*) and *Vṛttiprabhākar* (*VP*). His third work, *Yuktiprakāś* (*YP*) is less known. All three were written in a Braj-like medieval Hindi dialect, Bāṅgrū/Haryānvī (see n. 7, p. 3). These works are rather unusual in their originality and relative contemporaneity. Vedānta works of the era written in the vernacular typically tend to be translations of existing Sanskrit works and despite the breadth of the Advaita canon, there have been relatively few original works of similar scope written in the past two hundred years. *Vicārsāgar* was composed no later than 1848; several manuscripts with Nīscaldās's own revisions were also in circulation (Dādū 1994, 37-8, 69-77; Siṃha 1981, 19).⁴⁶ This work is a comprehensive exposition of Advaita Vedānta covering various topics essential for the realization of the true nature of *ātmā*, intended to leave no doubts in the reader's mind. He makes the bold claim:

*kavi-jana-kṛta bhāṣā bahuta, grantha jagata vikhyāta;
bina vicārasāgara lakhai, nahim sandeha nasāta* (*VS* v. 1.8).

Although there are many world-famous vernacular texts written by wise persons,
Without reading *Vicārsāgar*, doubts will not be destroyed.

While relatively unknown nowadays, the *Vicārsāgar*, “The Ocean of Contemplation,” was considered a significant work during its time. According to Swāmī Vivekananda “[this] book has more influence in India than any that has been written in any language within the last three centuries” (Vivekananda 1972, 335).⁴⁷ The *VS* has been translated into several other languages, Indian and Western, and there have been commentaries written on it, for example, by Sūratrām Dādū (Nīscaldās 1994) and by Nigamānand (Nīscaldās 1967). As further evidence of its lasting popularity, Ramana Maharshi (1879-1950) wrote a “compilation of the salient points” of the *VS* in Tamil, entitled the *Vicāra Maṇi Mālā*, “Jewel Garland of Enquiry,” which is based on the Tamil translation of the *VS* (Ramana and Sankaracharya 2002, 98).⁴⁸ To avoid burdening the reader with technical Sanskrit vocabulary, the *VS* is written in simple language and does not

⁴⁶ Dādū (37): *ek prati saṃ*° 1905 [1848 CE] *kī svāmī dvārikā dāsī, kāsī vāloṃ, ke pās bhī hai*. Caturvedī however gives its approximate date as 1857: *racanā-kāl lagbhag saṃ*° 1914 (515).

⁴⁷ One Swami Anand, while enumerating saints all over India in his monograph, *Path of Saints as the Fulfilment [sic] of Vedānta*, lists “Nischaldas, whose *Vicharsagar* is second only to the *Brahmasutras*, in the North [of India]” (Anand 1977, 84).

⁴⁸ In his introduction to the English translation of *Vicāra Maṇi Mālā*, Arthur Osborne writes that “on being appealed to by a devotee, Arunāchala Mudaliar, who complained that the volume in Tamil was too difficult to read and understand, Sri Bhagavan graciously made the following extracts” (98).

advocate any specific sectarian way (not even the Dādū Panth), nor does it engage in any argumentation and excessive refutation of other viewpoints. It reveals intimate command of diverse metrical forms and is broad in its coverage, describing the three varieties of truth-seekers and the nature of liberation (*mokṣa*).

Since the *VS* was directed at an elementary audience, Rājā Rāmsiṃha of Būndī requested that Nīścaldās write something for more erudite readers (Pītāmbār 1917, 7). In the (unattributed) introduction to the printed edition of *Vṛttiprabhākar* published by Khemrāj Śrīkṛṣṇadās, we learn that the *VS* was aimed at average persons (*manda-buddhi-vāle*), and hence was written in simple language (Nīścaldās 1899, n.p.). But since the *VS* only briefly explained the means of knowledge (*pramāṇa*), doubts would remain in the minds of many readers. In order to dispel these doubts completely and explain both the means of knowledge and the various kinds of error, the writing of the *Vṛttiprabhākar*, “The Illuminator of *Vṛttis*,⁴⁹” was undertaken. The text is almost entirely in prose, with the exception of three *dohās*. Its authorship is not in doubt, since Nīścaldās frequently refers to ideas already explained in his *VS*.

Compared to the *VS*, the *VP* is far more complex. For each *pramāṇa*, (means of knowledge), the Nyāya standpoint is presented first, then the differences between Old (*prācīna*) and New (*navya*) Nyāya, and differences between the Nyāya and Mīmāṃsaka viewpoints are also considered. Finally, these viewpoints are evaluated from the perspective of Advaita Vedānta. Without intimate familiarity with these other views and their specialized terminology, it is often a challenge to follow the argument. The language here is geared towards learned readers unlike the *VS* and the *YP*, which were written for the average person. Nīścaldās’s erudition is clearly showcased in this work through his familiarity with in the fields of *vyākaraṇa*, Nyāya, Mīmāṃsā, as well as all the Advaita secondary literature. Nīścaldās compares the standpoints presented by various Vedānta sub-schools, without any particular preference for one over the rest.

Nīścaldās also wrote a third, briefer work, *Yuktiprakāś* (*YP*),⁵⁰ “The Light of Analogical Reasoning,” which also fits the pattern of the *VS* and the *VP* – an independent treatise whose appeal lies in the reorganization of a traditional body of knowledge. It is a short text in which

⁴⁹ The term *vṛtti* refers to what is often translated as “mental mode,” “conception,” or the ill-advised “psychosis.” It pertains to the means by which knowledge takes place and will be described more thoroughly in Ch. 5.

⁵⁰ Caturvedī incorrectly gives this text as *Mukti-prakāś* (515).

Vedānta axioms are explained through illustrations (*dr̥ṣṭānta*) and principles deduced from those illustrations (*dār̥ṣṭānta*), and then reinforced with testimony from *śruti* and *smṛti*. This is done in the form of a dialogue between a teacher and student, through the course of thirty-nine arguments presented by means of analogies (*yukti*). According to Siṃha, this text was composed after the *VS* and the *VP*, since it refers to topics covered in each, whereas the author of the preface to the 1914 edition of the *YP* believes it was composed before the other two (Niścaldās 1914, 4). I am inclined to agree with the view that the *YP* predates the *VS* and the *VP*, since there are no references to *VS* or *VP* in *YP*. At the same time, however, there is no reference to *YP* in the *VS* or *VP*, but that is easily explained by the difference in their approaches: while *VS* and *VP* are sweeping, systematic overviews of Vedānta, *YP* is more of a supporting text aimed at clarifying specific issues of Vedānta for a seeker.

2.9 Other Unpublished Works:

When Siṃha visited the Kiharaulī library, he saw manuscripts for glosses (*ṭippaṇī*) by Niścaldās on the *Īśā* and *Kaṭha Upaniṣads*. The colophons of these manuscripts indicated that they were written at the behest of Rājā Rāmsiṃha (1981, 28-9).⁵¹ Nārāyaṇdās also saw a manuscript for the *Kena Up.* (1978-9, 2:850).⁵² Niścaldās is also said to have written a gloss (*ṭippaṇī*) on the *Mahābhārata*, but Siṃha was unable to verify this (29). Siṃha also believes that a *bhāṣā* text on Ayurveda is alluded to by *VS* v. 3.10, a discussion of the efficacy of vernacular Advaita texts in delivering knowledge of *ātmā* (29). Although a complete manuscript of this Ayurveda text has never been located, Niścaldās was also a good physician (*vaidya*) and the Kiharaulī library used to have handwritten pages on Ayurveda, though it is unclear who wrote these. Siṃha thinks that perhaps an Ayurveda text ascribed to Manīrām may have been based on these (29).

Sadly, very few manuscripts of Niścaldās's works have been located. The Kiharaulī library is no longer in existence, and its collection seems to be untraceable. Sūratrām Dādū wrote that many manuscripts were turned over to the Śrī Dādū Dayāl Mahāvidyālaya, Jaipur. When I contacted the principal of the institute, Swami Bajrang Dās, in the summer of 2006, he said the catalogs listed a *Vṛttiprabhākar* manuscript, but after weeks of searching, his staff were unable to

⁵¹ ... Būndīśekṣitodbhūteśāvāsasya ṭippaṇī. For *Kaṭha*: ... būndīśenṛpo ramaḥ sarāmo bhavatātparah [sic].

⁵² ... śrīdādūmahāvidyālay motī dūṅgarī meṃ...

locate it. Both Sūratrām Dādū in the early 1990s and Kapil in 2005 reported little success finding manuscripts mentioned by earlier scholars. I even contacted descendants of Sūratrām Dādū in Delhi and Narnaul, Haryana, who told me that their families no longer possessed any manuscripts. Apparently the manuscripts of Nīścaldās's works were under threat even during the time of his immediate successor, Dayārām. Nārāyaṇdās mentions a pandit opposed to Vedānta who borrowed from Dayārām a manuscript of one of Nīścaldās's works, a commentary (*tīkā*) on the *Mahābhārata* commentary *Nīlakaṇṭhī*, which dealt with two profound sections on Vedānta. The pandit returned the manuscripts with their pages glued together, but this was not detected for some time (1978-9, 2:850-51).⁵³ Mangaldās also mentions hearsay that, in the time of Mahant Rāmānand, Nīścaladās' last successor, many members of the Ārya Samāj "borrowed" books from the library, purportedly for their own libraries (20).⁵⁴ I later procured a microfilm of a manuscript of the *Vṛttiprabhākar* from the British Library, which could possibly have been one such "borrowed" manuscript (Nīścaladāsa 1868).

2.10 Influence of Nīścaldās and His Works

I have already mentioned the *Vicāra Maṇi Mālā* written by Ramana Maharshi (1879-1950) in Tamil based on the *VS*, and also the high regard that Vivekananda (1863-1902) had for the *VS*. Banerjee suggests that Nīścaldās's treatises were "studied [by Vivekananda] with great attention and recommended studied as a great text to all," and that Nīścaldās had significant influence on Vivekananda's stance regarding knowledge and action (2007, 140-5). As another measure of its influence, Dayananda Saraswati (1824-1883), founder of the Ārya Samāj and staunch critic of Advaita Vedānta, in his *Satyārthaprakāśa* (light of truth) singled out for attack Nīścaldās, specifically his *Vṛttiprabhākar*, alongside Vasiṣṭha and Śaṅkara (1915, 355-6; 1963, 393-4). Since Nīścaldās himself passed away in 1863, Dayananda Saraswati was his contemporary, while Vivekananda and Ramana came into their prime one to three decades after his death. Hence their comments give us some sense of how widely known he must have been in their time.⁵⁵

⁵³ See also Siṃha (1981, 29).

⁵⁴ *vartamān mahant jī ke samay vedādi kī bahut sī pustakeṃ pustakalayoṃ ke liye māṅg kar anekoṃ ārya-samājī mahānubhav le gaye, aisā sunte haiṃ!*

⁵⁵ Both Darda (1971, 2) and Tank (1984, 140) list Nīścaldās among the religious and social reformers that had an influence on Rajasthan. Others in the list are Vivekananda, Dayananda Saraswati, Sanyasi Atma Ram, and Swami Govind Giri.

A measure of the influence of a philosophical text is the secondary literature that stems from it. For the *VS*, we have Pt. Pītāmbār's gloss (*ṭippaṇī*) written in 1917. Pītāmbār also wrote an abridgment of the *VP*, called *Vṛttiratnāvalī*, published in the same volume (Nīscaldās 1917b), which has been reprinted many times since. There is also an abridgement of the *VS* by Lakṣānanda, the *Vedānta-pradīpikā* (Siṃha 1981, 92), a Marathi commentary, *Vicār-sāgar Rahasya*, by 'Sākhare' Kisan Mahārāj (Kapil 2005, 247), not to mention the translations into numerous languages. *VS* has been translated into modern Hindi, Sanskrit, Bengali, Marathi, Gujarati, Tamil, Telugu and English,⁵⁶ and has been available in various versions since at least 1917, if not earlier (Kapil 2005, 245).⁵⁷ The Khemrāj Śrīkrṣṇadās (KS) Hindi edition has been available since at least 1906⁵⁸ and is regularly studied by Advaita Vedānta monks in Benares, Rishikesh and Haridwar. The Vārkarī sect of Maharashtra,⁵⁹ which worships Viṭhobā as a form of Kṛṣṇa, employs the *VS* as one of its primary training texts in its educational institutions (Anonymous 2006; Pal 1968, 91).⁶⁰ The *VS* is held in sufficiently high regard that portions from it were read out to a dying man for comfort (Kopardekar 1985, 69).⁶¹ There is mention of the Śīrḍīvāle Sāi Bābā (1836-1918) giving discourses on the *VS* and recommending its study in his biography, *Shri Sai Satcharita* (Dabholkar 2002, 111).

The *VP* too has been in print continuously since 1899, published virtually unchanged by Khemrāj Śrīkrṣṇadās and the Venkaṭeśvar Steam Press in Mumbai for at least 50 years. This is the only version readily available, and it is plagued by many typographical and other errors.⁶² Ātmānand Muni undertook a painstaking revision of the text in 1957 without the benefit of any

⁵⁶ There may be versions in other language, e.g., Nārāyaṇadās also mentions Urdu and Gurmukhi versions (1978-9, 2:852). Shiv Brat Lal (1860-1939) of the Radha Swami Satsang movement may also have authored one or more Urdu works based on *VS*, though its fidelity is suspect, since, according to Ansarullah (1998, 64), "Swami Nischal Das Ji of the Daoood Panth [*sic*] has based his *Vichar Sagar* on this book [Vidyāraṇya's *Pañcadaśī*, referred to as Vidya Raina's Panjadashi]. Shiv Brat writes in the preface: "I found that people hardly follow *Vichar Sagar* in Hindi, this is the reason why on its basis *Vichar Kalapdrum* [*sic*] in Urdu is written" (64-65). Shiv Brat Lal goes on to state (regarding his version of *Pañcadaśī*), "Since my primary interest is to arouse interest and remove doubts from the minds of the people, the inadequacies in the translation are excusable" (65).

⁵⁷ The 1917 Hindi edition by Brajballabh Hariprasād of Guṛgāon was the fifth edition, *pañcamāvṛtti*.

⁵⁸ The 1906 edition (*saṃvat* 1963) does not include Pt. Pītāmbār's *ṭippaṇa* (Nīscaldās 1906).

⁵⁹ The word *vārkarī* is derived from *vārī*, "[multiple] times" and *karī*, "one who does." A Vārkarī is one who makes the pilgrimage to Pandharpur twice a year regularly, on foot if possible. An alternate "self-definition" of *vārī*, attributed to S. K. Neurgavkar, is "coming and going," and a *vārkarī* is "one who comes and goes" (Mokashi 1987, 23).

⁶⁰ From the website of the Shri Gajanan Maharaj Warkari Shikshan Sanstha, regarding the education at its school in Shegaon, Maharashtra: "This Sanstha is started in 1964. Learning Adhyatmic knowledge and the teaching of the Great Santas and to spread it was the main objective. A syllabus of 4 years is specially prepared. Sanskrit language, and Dhyaneshwari, Bhagwat, Bhagwat-Geeta, Tukaram Gatha, Eknathi Bhagwat, Vichar Sagar, etc. Granthas are taught." (Anonymous 2006).

⁶¹ Gulabrao Maharaj (1881-1915), a Maharashtrian Advaitin did so to comfort a man dying of tuberculosis in Madhan, ca. 1911.

⁶² Muni (1957, 62): *aśuddhiyom kā to koī pār hī nahīm*, "there is no end to the errors..." See Muni (62-64) for a discussion of the nature of errors, and also Appendices 2 and 3.

handwritten manuscripts (Niścaldās 1957). There were two editions of Ātmānand's version, and though it is vastly superior, its original print run was undoubtedly quite small, and it has been out of print for nearly 40 years.⁶³ Certainly the *VP* would have become much better known if this version been more widely distributed. A Telugu translation of the *VP* by Vadapalli Pattabhirama Sarma (Niscaladas 1912) is available only at the British Library. The Tamil version by Kuppuswamy that I encountered in Rishikesh (n. 178, p. 71) is also available as microform (Niścaldasa 1901). Conversely, the *YP* has virtually dropped out of sight – I was only able to locate a single copy of it in the Library of Congress collection (Niścaldās 1914). A Kannada version translated by Swami Śivānanda Bhāratī also exists, but held only in a German library (Niścaldās 1911). The most recent Hindi edition of the *YP* on record dates to 1959 (Kapil 2005, 247). A relatively recent Malayalam translation of the *YP* is also available (Niścaldās 1966).

Within the Dādū Panth, Niścaldās is included among Dādū Dayāl's illustrious followers. As W. G. Orr stated (1947), "the most famous Dadu Panthi writer of modern times is Nischal Das... His books are by no means easy reading, and few, with the exception of some able Hindu scholars, have attempted to master them" (Orr 1947, 215). As Monika Thiel-Horstmann observed almost half a century later (1989), not much had changed: Niścaldās was "a highly thought of but hardly read Dādūpanthī Vedāntist" (1992, 146). During my visits to Dādūpanthī areas in Rajasthan and Haryana in 2006 and 2008, I frequently encountered expressions of pride from Dādūpanthīs that Niścaldās was a great scholar respected all over India, and now the world, since I had come all the way from USA to study him. Yet when I asked about locating manuscripts and printed versions of his less common texts like the *VP* and the *YP*, most were not even familiar with these titles. When we located Niścaldās's center (*gaddī*) in Kiharaulī and were fortunate to meet with the wife of the last member of Niścaldās's lineage, the three Dādūpanthī religious leaders (*mahant*) who were helping me expressed gratitude to me for providing them with a viewing (*darśan*) of the great scholar's center and wooden sandals (*pādukā*) and expressed wonder that it required someone like me to come from overseas and motivate them to look for a place that was practically in their backyard.⁶⁴ They all were familiar with Niścaldās, but had never even read the *VS*, although they could quote select verses from it verbatim. During

⁶³ The second edition was published in 1969 and does not give the number of copies printed. The first edition (1957) had a print run of a thousand copies.

⁶⁴ Arjundās Svāmī remarked, "kitne acraṇ kī bāt hai ki aise mahān puruṣ ke āj hamāre darśan hue haiṃ aur vah bhī āp ko amṛikā se ākar hamēṃ yahām lānā paḍā!"

my stay in Rishikesh in 2006, when seeking a teacher with whom to study the *VP*, I found that many monks considered themselves unfit to teach it, and a few told me that they would like to study the text themselves, since they had heard it was a formidable (*pracaṇḍa*) text.

A major reason for the popularity of Niścaldās's works is his decision to make them accessible to average people by writing them in the vernacular (*bhāṣā*).⁶⁵ At the conclusion of the *VS*, Niścaldās states:

*tin yaha bhāṣāgrantha kiya, raṁca na upajī lāja;
tāmaiṁ yaha ika hetu hai, dayādharma sirtāj. (VS v. 7.113)*

From them,⁶⁶ I've written this work in the vernacular, without embarrassment.
Compassion and *dharma* are its crown. In writing this, I have only this one goal:

*bina vyākaraṇa na paḍhi sakai, grantha saṁskṛta manda;
paḍhai yāhi anayāsa hīṁ, lahai su paramānanda (VS v. 7.114)*

Without knowledge of grammar, Sanskrit works cannot be read by the average folk,
They can read this (*VS*) with ease, and attain the highest bliss.

Niścaldās's reasons for writing in the vernacular will be examined in great detail in section 4.1, beginning on p. 70.

2.11 More on Niścaldās's Patron, Rājā Rāmsiṁha of Būndī

Rājā Rāmsiṁha⁶⁷ of Būndī, who reigned from 1821 to 1889 CE, is an embodiment of seemingly contradictory impulses. On the one hand, he was very traditional and conservative. But he was also closely allied with the British. He supported the Indian rebel cause yet turned his cannons on the rebel soldiers when they came to his gates. He had family members and opponents killed and yet tried to stop the practices of female infanticide, the killing of old women accused of witchcraft, and animal sacrifices.

⁶⁵ Siṁha notes the presence of words from the local Bāṅgrū dialect (89). This is the another name for the Haryānvī dialect, considered to have a 92% lexical similarity with Braj Bhāṣā. See n. 7, p. 3.

⁶⁶ The works he has studied. See *VS* v. 7.111-12 quoted earlier on p. 16.

⁶⁷ At least one author was confused by the profusion of contemporaneous Rājā Rāmsiṁha-s in Rajasthan, with Orr (1947, 215) reporting that Niścaldās conducted "many learned discussions" in Jaipur under the reign of Sawai Rām Singh II (r. 1835-80). There is also Rājā Rām Singh of neighboring Koṭā (r. 1827-66).

Rāmsiṃha had studied Sanskrit in childhood and was deeply interested in Vedānta and religious texts. Gahlot mentions that it was a matter of honor to Rāmsiṃha to act as an old-style noble, *purāṇe ḍhaṅg kā Rājput raīs*, and he adopted traditional practices in all government matters (1960, 99-100).⁶⁸ Tod calls him “the most conservative prince in conservative Rājputāna,



Figure 7: Rājā Rāmsiṃha (Bautze 1985, 95)

and a grand specimen of a true Rājput gentleman” (1920, 3:1520n2). He would bathe and have his clothes washed after even a moment’s meeting with Englishmen and Muslims (Gahlot 1960, 99)!⁶⁹ Art and literature flourished under him (Datta and Narain 1985, 283), and Būndī was renowned as the second Kāśī with forty schools for teaching Sanskrit (Gahlot 1960, 100). He honored poets and writers with gifts of land and money, and had many well-known personages at his court in addition to Nīscaldās. These included the Sanskrit scholar Pt. Gangārām and the poet Sūryamalla (var. Sūrajmalla or Sūrajmal) Miśraṅ (1815-1868 CE), who composed the *Vaṃśa Bhāskar*, a poem in Hindi, Braj, Prakrit, Sanskrit and the regional poetic languages Piṅgal and

⁶⁸ *Rājya praṇālī meṃ pratyek bāt purāṇe ḍhaṅg kī rakhne kā ise śauk thā aur apne āpko purāṇe ḍhaṅg kā ek rājput raīs mānane meṃ ye apnā gaurav samajhte the.*

⁶⁹ *Ye aṅgrez va musalmānoṃ se chane par mulākāt karne ke bād nahāte aur kapaḍe bhī dhulvāte the.* I’m taking *chane par* as *kṣaṇ bhar*, but have been unable to verify this usage.

Ḍiṅgal⁷⁰ about the history from earliest times of Rāmsiṃha's lineage, the Hāṛā-s of the Cauhān dynasty (Sūryamalla 2007). The medicines of the court physician Vaidyarāj Bābā Ātmārām Sanyāsī were very famous. Other notable scholars of the court were Āsānand Jīvanlāl, Paṭhān Hamīdkhā⁷¹ and Jīvan Lāl Nagar, the king's prime minister and poet (Datta and Narain 1985, 283; Dhoundiyal 1964, 243; Gahlot 1960, 99-100; Khan 1992; Mishra 1987, 101; Sūryamalla and Devala 2007).

The case of Sūryamalla Miśraṇ's *Vaṃśa Bhāskar* itself provides further insight into Rāmsiṃha. Sūryamalla, like his father, Caṇḍīdān (1791-1835 CE) before him and his adopted son Murārīdān after him, was a court poet for Rāmsiṃha. He earned the title Miśraṇ by showing proficiency in six languages (Sharma 1976, 7). Once, when Rāmsiṃha was listening to Pt. Āsānand narrate the *Mahābhārata* in his court, a desire awoke in him to have a similar narrative of his Cauhān lineage commissioned by Sūryamalla. However, as Sanskrit was not widely understood at this time, why not have it written in the vernacular (Khan 1973, 17)? Sūryamalla is said to have accepted the commission on the condition that he would be allowed to write the truth. As the work progressed and Rāmsiṃha saw both the good qualities and the flaws of his ancestors captured in verse, he demanded that Sūryamalla leave his defects out of the work or not write anything. The poet is said to have promptly quit work on the piece and the work was eventually completed posthumously by Sūryamalla's adopted son Murārīdān, who complied with Rāmsiṃha's bowdlerizing desires (Khan 1992, 54; 1973, 24-5; Sharma 1976, 9-10). Alam Shah Khan believes that the actual unflattering events that Sūryamalla would have incorporated in his work include: 1) Rāmsiṃha treacherously had his own eldest son Bhīmsiṃha killed for being disrespectful (*avajñākārī*) and for roaming in the company of [European] foreigners (*yavana*); 2) Rāmsiṃha had his brother Gopālsiṃha placed under house-arrest (*nazar-qaid*) on allegations of depravity (*duṣcaritratā*), and he died under arrest; 3) Rāmsiṃha's intimate connections with the

⁷⁰ Piṅgal is said to be a synthesis of Braj and Khaṛī Bolī, while Ḍiṅgal is a mix of Rajasthani and Peshachi (Dhoundiyal 1964, 242). According to Prabhakar, who draws on Tessitori's *Bardic & Historical Survey of Rajputana*, and Grierson's *Linguistic Survey of India*, Piṅgal/Piṅgaḷa is "Braj Bhāṣā more or less adulterated and vitiated by the introduction of local words and idioms, while [Ḍiṅgal/Diṅgaḷa] is the literary form of old Mārṇwārī, one of the principal Rājasthānī dialects. ... The standardized old Mārṇwārī characterized by its elaborateness of diction and currency of poetical and obsolete words different from the colloquial ones was, however, known as Diṅgaḷa only in the context of versified compositions" (Prabhakar 1976, 46; Grierson 1967, 3-4). [I was unable to verify Prabhakar's reference to Tessitori (1917, 1:iv). Tessitori (1917) contains two sections of two parts each, and none of these has a 'p. iv'].

⁷¹ Only Gahlot mentions Paṭhān Hamīdkhā (100), and I am unable to find any further details as to his claim to notability, or that of Pts. Gangārām and Āsānand/Āsānand.

British (see below) would not have been reported favorably by Sūryamalla who was anti-British and sympathized with the mutineers in the 1857 Revolt (Khan 1973, 26-31).

The kingdom of Būndī was indeed closely linked with the British, and was the first of the Rājputānā kingdoms to ally itself with the East India Company (Mishra 1987, 184-5). When Rāmsiṃha's father and predecessor to the throne Biśansīṃha died in 1821, he specifically requested that James Tod, the then Agent to the Governor General (AGG) for the Rajasthanī princely states (*riyāsat*), be the guardian of his son Rāmsiṃha, who was only ten years old at the time (Tod and Crooke 1920, 3:1733). Tod was present at the coronation of Rāmsiṃha not just as guardian,⁷² but also as the authority who would ratify his ascension to the throne (Gahlot 1960, 97n*; Tod and Crooke 1920, 3:1740-44). The kingdom of Būndī paid the British government an annual "rent" of Rs. 80,000 to include two-thirds of the district (*parganā*) of Keśorāy Pāṭaṇ in its kingdom (Aitchison 1929, 217-8; Gahlot 1960, 98), which amounted to over a tenth of the estimated revenue of Būndī, reported to be Rs. 75,55,323 as of 1897 (Hendley 1897, 29). In 1877, Rāmsiṃha was appointed Knight Grand Commander of the Order of the Star of India (GCSI) by Queen Victoria and given the title of Advisor to the Queen. In 1878 he was awarded the Companion of the Most Eminent Order of the Indian Empire (CIE) (Chisholm 1910, 798; Gahlot 1960, 99; Anonymous 1877). From 1886 onwards, he had rupee coins minted with "Queen Victoria" engraved on one side and his name on the other (Gahlot 1960, 101). He also signed treaties with the British for the mutual extradition of "persons charged with certain specific offences" (Aitchison 1929, 218, 232-4), and for prohibiting the manufacturing of salt in Būndī and permitting only salt on which "duty had been levied by the British government." For the latter treaty, Rāmsiṃha was paid Rs. 8,000 per year by the British government (Aitchison 1929, 219, 234-6).

Aitchison grumbled that "Rām Singh's attitude towards the British Government during the mutiny of 1857 was one of apathy which, in the case of the rising of the Raj troops at Kotah, almost amounted to open support of the rebel cause," but this act was more likely a result of his ill-will towards Koṭā (218; Gahlot 1960, 98-9). However, in 1858, he closed his gates and turned the Būndī fort's cannons on the Indian rebel soldiers and did not grant them sanctuary. In the same year, when the Mīnā tribe of Kharār rebelled, he had the uprising squelched, presumably by

⁷² Rāmsiṃha was Tod's "nephew by courtesy and adoption." (Tod and Crooke 1920, 3:1520n2) and Tod was a *rākhī*-brother to Rāmsiṃha's mother (Khan 1973, 30-31).

force (Gahlot 1960, 100; Vashishtha 1993, 10-11; Sharma 1996, 90-91).⁷³ When Bhomasimḥa Hārā, an estate-holder (*jāgīrdār*) of Gothaṛā, transgressed government orders and spread revolt through the kingdom, his estate was confiscated and he was expelled from Būndī. Later, the transgressor was killed along with his brother and sons (Gahlot 1960, 100).⁷⁴ Clearly, Rāmsimḥa governed with an iron fist.

On the other hand, Gahlot also tells us that Rāmsimḥa used to care deeply for the welfare of his subjects (99). He banned the Rājput practice of female infanticide in 1936 CE, eight years before the British instituted a similar law in Būndī (98 n. ‡). During that time, it was customary, particularly among the aboriginal tribes, to accuse old women of being witches (*dāīn*) eating children and humans. These women would be mistreated and abused, and sometimes even drowned alive. Rāmsimḥa abolished this practice in Būndī in 1829 (100). To counter the blind belief of his subjects in ghosts, he announced that anyone who arranged for a direct encounter with a ghost would be awarded 50 *bīghā*-s of land;⁷⁵ nobody was able to collect. (100). In the severe droughts of 1833 and 1838 he looked after the well-being of his citizens (99). He stopped “traditional” practices such as buffalo and goat sacrifices during the Caitra (Mar-Apr) and Aśvin (Sep-Oct) *Navarātrī Devī pūjās*, nine- to ten-day long festivals of goddess worship (98).

In addition to his interest in the arts and literature and his administrative actions, Rāmsimḥa is described by Gahlot as having a great desire to contemplate and discuss Vedānta (100),⁷⁶ perhaps implying that this was the reason behind Rāmsimḥa’s good works (*satkārya*).

Viṭṭhalaśāstrī is more direct. After relating that Nīscaldās was adopted by Rāmsimḥa and his family as their guru, he writes that Rāmsimḥa performed good works in accordance with Nīscaldās’s request (1899, 10).⁷⁷ Since Nīscaldās did not visit Būndī until 1856 (Simḥa 1981, 10), the good works described above occurred prior to Nīscaldās’s visit, and there is no record of any other communication between Nīscaldās and Rāmsimḥa prior to Nīscaldās’s visit, one must conservatively assume that the motives for Rāmsimḥa’s good works were something other than his beloved guru’s wishes. There is, however, written record of correspondence between

⁷³ ... *jab kharār ke mīnoṃ ne balvā kiṃ to mahārāv rāmsimḥa ne unko dabā diṃ* (Gahlot 1960, 100).

⁷⁴ *Goṭhārā ke jāgīrdār ... ne rājya kī ājñāoṃ kī ulamghan kiṃ aur rāj vidroh failāyā, isse uskī jāgīr jabta karke use rājya se nikāl diṃ gayā. Paścāt vah may apne bhāi ... va putra ... ke mārā gayā.*

⁷⁵ Approximately 30 acres, assuming these were *sarkārī bīghā*-s. See n. 35 on p. 7.

⁷⁶ *Mahārāv rāmsimḥa ko vedānt par vicār vimarśa karne kī baḍā cāv thā.*

⁷⁷ ... *Nīscaldāsji būndī meṃ ā gaye. pher sādhu ke samāgam se rāmsimḥaji kī bhaktibhāv vṛddhimṃgata huā. Aur sab rājkuṭumb nīscaldās viṣe gurubhāv rakḥkar unkī ājñānusār vartane lagā. Aur nīscaldās ke kathanānsār rāmsimḥane satkārya kiṃ.*

Nīścaldās and Rāmsiṃha, and also correspondence from Nīścaldās's disciple Dayārām to Rāmsiṃha upon Nīścaldās's death (Siṃha 1981, 10-13).⁷⁸ Further, in the colophon to the earliest version of the *Vṛttiprabhākar*, dated barely five years after Nīścaldās's death, it is stated that “this text has been disseminated (*prasiddha kiyā haiṃ*) by the servants of holy men, Nārāyaṇa Trikam and Līlādhar Odhav. They researched the text over at the esteemed (*nirmala*) Lord Rāmsiṃha's [place], at the request of Swāmī Trilokrām, and published it in Mumbai at Harī Liṅgū Kadam's printing press” (Nīščaladāsa 1868, 8.41).⁷⁹ Hence there is strong evidence of the relationship between Rāmsiṃha and Nīścaldās, in the connection of Vedānta.

Rāmsiṃha passed away in 1889 at the age of seventy-eight, having ruled his kingdom for sixty-eight years. He was survived by five legitimate sons as well as three illegitimate sons borne by his concubines (Gahlot 1960, 101).⁸⁰ The myriad contradictions in Rāmsiṃha's actions may be best explained by borrowing from Tod's assessment of the character of Rāmsiṃha's father, the Mahārāo Bīśansīṃha: “He was an honest man, and every inch a Rajput. Under an unpolished exterior, he concealed an excellent heart and an energetic soul; he was by no means deficient in understanding, and *possessed a thorough knowledge of his own interests* [emphasis mine]. ... He was somewhat despotic in his own little empire, knowing that fear is a necessary incentive to respect in the governed...” (1920, 3:1518-9, emphasis mine). In light of what has been said about Rāmsiṃha, it is unlikely that he had any intention to contribute to the formation of a nationalist identity when he commissioned Nīścaldās to write the *VP*. He was more likely motivated by a desire to show his respect for tradition and his guru, to earn merit (*puṇya*) as a patron of spiritual teachers, and also possibly to reform the orthodoxy, particularly the pandits in his court who did not think highly of Nīścaldās prior to his victory over them in religio-philosophical debate (*śāstrārtha*). Rāmsiṃha always acted in his self-interest, doing what he thought was best for him and his kingdom, in keeping with his pride in being a traditional, conservative, honorable Rājput. He would make deals with the British when it suited his purposes, and break them when it didn't. He looked after his subjects as long as they followed his wishes. Yet he was not completely bound by tradition and showed willingness to make some changes for the wellbeing of his

⁷⁸ See also n. 617, p. 379.

⁷⁹ *soī granth svāmi trilokrām-ji ki ājñā saiṃ santana ke dās nārāyaṇ-ji trikam-ji au līlādhar odhav-jī donūṃ milke nirmale svāmi rāmsiṃg-ji ki pās sodhāyke mumbāī maiṃ harī liṅgū kadam ke chāp-khānaiṃ maiṃ chapāyke prasiddha kiyā haiṃ.*

⁸⁰ *iske ... pāṃc rājīkumār tathā ... tīn anauras putra upa-patniyoṃ (paṛadāyatōṃ) se the* (Gahlot 101). A *paṛadāyat* f. (var. *paṛadāyat*) is a woman who was a *dāsī* of the king married by the king to someone else but staying in the king's palace as a *upa-patni*, co-wife or *rakhail*, concubine, with the right to remain in *pardā* similar to a queen *RHŠK* (2:716 s.v.; Kumar 2003).

subjects, perhaps even to the extent of requesting his guru to write a text in the vernacular. We do have record of his awareness of the wider accessibility of vernacular languages over Sanskrit, since he specifically requested that his court poet, Sūryamalla Miśraṇ, compose an epic narrative of his rule in the vernacular (Khan 1973, 17). We also have evidence of his role in helping get Niścaldās's *VP* published after Niścaldās's untimely death.

2.12 Chapter Summary

Our review of Niścaldās's biographical sources presents him as a learned yet simple, unworldly man, a staunch Advaita Vedāntin without any interest in fame or fortune. After his mother passed away when he was thirteen or fourteen, he was raised among the Dādū Panth, and was most certainly influenced by their ideas of religious tolerance and disregard of caste. From the age of fourteen or fifteen he devoted himself to the pursuit of knowledge, and went to study Sanskrit in Benares. Due to earlier experiences of caste discrimination, he is said to have kept his Jāt caste secret from his teachers, who would otherwise not have taught him Sanskrit, Nyāya and Vedānta. Hagiographic accounts state that when he confessed his true caste to his teacher, Pt. Kākārām, who had offered Niścaldās his daughter's hand in marriage, Kākārām cursed Niścaldās to suffer, every day, from a fever. Even if one discounts these accounts as fanciful, it is plausible that Niścaldās encountered caste-discrimination, which, if true, would most certainly have influenced his stance against caste in his writings, and possibly also his choice to write in the vernacular.

There is no proof that Niścaldās's writings were influenced by his patron, Rājā Rāmsiṃha of Būndī, Rajasthan. There is documentary evidence that Rāmsiṃha was indeed a patron of Niścaldās,⁸¹ but non-hagiographic sources such as the historian of Rajasthan, Gahlot (1960), do not directly mention the connection.⁸² The Rājā was reputed to be a Sanskrit scholar, and a staunch traditionalist. Yet this scholar-king was ruthless and iron-fisted, an opportunist who formed close relationships with the ruling British colonial regime. However, as mentioned earlier, he was certainly aware of the wider accessibility of vernacular languages over Sanskrit, and specifically requested his court poet, Sūryamalla Miśraṇ, to compose an epic narrative of his

⁸¹ As evinced by several letters from the Rājā to Niścaldās, whose content was presented by Raṇjīt Siṃha (1981, 10-13)

⁸² Gahlot only mentions that Niścaldās, the author of *VS*, was coterminous: “*dādūpanthī sādhu niścaldās vicārsāgar nāmak vedānt granth ke racayitā insī ke samay meṃ huā thā.*” (1960, 100). Due to the ambiguous wording, it is unclear if Gahlot is implying that Rāmsiṃha commissioned *VS*. Patronage is implied, since this sentence follows one which mentions Suryamal Miśra as dependent on the king for patronage.

rule in the vernacular. It is quite likely not a hagiographic exaggeration that Rāmsiṃha and his family considered Nīścaldās as their Vedānta teacher. It is very possible that Rāmsiṃha requested him to write works in the vernacular for the benefit of the common person, and just as likely that the king also requested him to write a text that would be equally appreciated by a learned, Sanskrit-speaking audience. But it is not the least bit surprising that Nīścaldās totally neglected to acknowledge his patron in any of his extant three *bhāṣā* Vedānta works. As he states in the invocatory verses (*maṅgala dohā*) at the start of *VS*: Being pure, boundless Brahman, in which all of creation occurs, to whom should he prayerfully bow down (*VS* vv. 1.1-5)?⁸³ One has the impression that Nīścaldās was being true to his uncompromising understanding of non-duality, and everything he wrote appears to consistently stem from that. The patronage of the king must have been welcome, but its absence would have not bothered Nīścaldās in the least. One is reminded of the anecdote about Nīścaldās's successor, Manīrām, and the British tax assessor, recounted in section 2.7 above. When the assessor asked Manīrām what he would do if his meager wealth was exhausted by his charity, Manīrām is said to have replied that he too would then go stand in line with the poor who queued at his door for charity.

⁸³ The essence of these verses have been presented here. See section 3.8, p. 67 for the full context.

3 The Dādū Panth and Nīscaldās

In this chapter, I present the life and thought of Dādū Dayāl, the founder of the Dādū Panth to which Nīscaldās belonged, through an examination of Dādū's hagiographies, of Dādū's teachings as recorded in the *Dādū Vāṇī*, and of the writings of some early followers in Dādū's lineage, namely Rajjab and Sundardās. I do so to determine if there are any parallels between the lives and hagiographies of these early Dādūpanthīs and Nīscaldās, and to ascertain their attitudes towards patronage, religion and caste. I explore whether the experiences and/or teachings of Dādū and his followers may have influenced Nīscaldās's stance on caste and writing in the vernacular, and whether there are any parallels between the lives of Nīscaldās and Dādū, and their attitudes towards patronage, religion and caste. I also examine the internal structure of the Dādū Panth, Nīscaldās's place within this structure, and the actual relationship between the Panth and Nīscaldās.

3.1 Dādū Dayāl, the Founder of the Dādū Panth

The Dādū Panth⁸⁴ is named after its founder, Dādū Dayāl (1544-1603). Definite biographical detail about Dādū Dayāl is scarce; most sources are based on sectarian accounts of his life, primarily the *Dādū Janma Līlā*, *DJL* (ca. 1620) by Jangopāl who was one of Dādū's disciples, the *Sarvāṅgī* (ca. 1620) of Rajjab, another first-generation disciple of Dādū, and the *Bhaktamāl* (ca. 1713) by Rāghavdās, a fifth generation disciple (1988, 11-14; Caturvedī 1964, 488-9; Orr 1947, 26, 210). These accounts are largely hagiographic in nature.⁸⁵ According to these sources, Dādū was raised in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, by a merchant named Lodīrām, who found him as a baby in the Sabarmati river. In some versions of *DJL*, the baby was of divine origin (Jangopal 1988, 19, 34).⁸⁶ Later versions state that Lodīrām was a Nāgar or Gaur brahman, but Orr and Caturvedī discuss the possibility that he was Muslim since the name Dādū was actually derived from the common Muslim name Dāūd and his parents Lodī⁸⁷ and Basī or Basīran, sons Garībdās and Miskīndās, daughters Abbā and

⁸⁴ *Panth* literally means 'way, road or path.' In the present context it means 'sect.' Hence a *Dādūpanthī* is one who belongs to the Dādū Panth, a follower of the sect.

⁸⁵ Callewaert writes rather tactlessly that the sectarian historians "indulged in laudatory embellishments to the point of most fanciful 'miracle mongering'" (Jangopal 1988, 12).

⁸⁶ In *DJL* 1.6.3 Dādū is described as "*bālak adhar*, a child from heaven." In 1.6.4 "*palaṭī kāyā bāla kā rūpa hvai*, He transformed His body into the shape of a child." In 1.6.5 "*līnā avatārā*, he became an *avatār*, incarnation of the divine." These are common hagiographic tropes of descent (Smith 2000, 22-26, 29-34).

⁸⁷ Caturvedī also mentions that Dādū's father may have been named Sulemān and his mother, Habbā (1964, 490).

Sabbā,⁸⁸ and grandson Faqīrdās all had Muslim names (Caturvedī 1964, 490; Orr 1947, 50-51).⁸⁹

Dādū was a cotton carder by profession, likely an inherited family trade. This is confirmed by a Persian account, the *Dabistān-i-Mazāhib* (The School of Religions), “a kind of encyclopædia of religions” (Orr 1947, 47),⁹⁰ where he is described as a cotton carder (*naddāf*), that is, one who prepares the cotton fibers for spinning into yarn. Also, in Marathi works by Eknāth (ca. 1533-1599), Tukārām (1598-1650) and the *Bhaktivijaya* by Mahipati (1715-1790), Dādū is referred to as a cotton-carder (*piñjārī*), possibly an inherited family trade (Orr 1947, 47; Jangopal 1988, 15; Abbott and Godbole 1982, 2:384; Callewaert 1978, 30-31). Thus, it is possible that, like Kabir (1398-1448),⁹¹ Dādū also came from a lower caste family which converted to Islam (Vaudeville 1974, 83-89).

At the age of eleven, Dādū met his guru, whose identity also is a subject of controversy. Sundardās, Dādū’s direct disciple, gives his name as Vṛddhānand in his *Guru Sampradāya*, “Teacher Lineage” (Sundardās 1978, 271).⁹² In Jangopāl’s *DJL*, he is identified as Bābā Būḍhā, with a variant referring to him only as an old man (*būḍhā*). It is also implied that this teacher is none other than the Supreme Lord (*paramesura*).⁹³ Orr suggests that he was Shaikh Buddhan (var. Buḍhan), a Sufi saint in Sambhar, of the Qādirī order, and presents what he considers irrefutable historical evidence of Dādū’s connection to this Buddhan and of relations between Buddhan’s descendants and the Narainā seat (*gaddī*), that continued

⁸⁸ The daughters are given as Havā and Bāī by Jangopāl in v 9.6 (1988, 60) and as Hawwā and Shabbo by Orr (1947, 30).

⁸⁹ Callewaert is unusually silent on the matter of these Muslim names.

⁹⁰ For more recent scholarship on the *Dabistān-i-Mazāhib*, see Behl (2011). Behl describes the mid-seventeenth-century *Dabistān* accounts of the various religion as biased and reported through the lens of the narrator, Mūbad Shāh’s Zoroastrian sect, the Āzar Kaivānī, and its politics. Behl does not discuss the *Dabistān*’s account of Dādū, though he suggests that the author “finds monistic philosophical systems most sympathetic to his own view of religion” (226). The longer version of this article (Behl 2010) also does not refer to Dādū.

⁹¹ Vaudeville (1974, 39).

⁹² Sundardās’ *Guru Sampradāya* vv. 8-9: *Dādūjī kā guru aba suniye; bahuta bhānti tinike guna guniye. Dādūjī kauṃ darasana dīnhau; akasmāta kāhū nahīṇ cīnhaum. Bṛddhānanda nāma hai jākau; ṭhaura ṭhikānau kahūṇ na tākau. Sahaja rūpa bicarai bhū māṇhīm. Icchā parai tahām so jāṇhīm*. “Now listen, who was Dādū’s guru, who was very virtuous. He gave Dādū his *darśan* suddenly, no one [else] recognized him [at that time]. Vṛddhānand is his name, he has no fixed place. He wanders the earth in his unqualified (*sahaja*) form, going where[ever] he desires.” Sundar then proceeds for nearly another 40 verses to trace back the lineage culminating in Guru Brahmānanda (v. 46) (Sundardās 1978, 270-71, 78).

⁹³ *DJL* 1.7: ... *Bābā Būḍhai dīnaum darasūṃ*. “Bābā Būḍhā gave him his *darśan*.” Variant: *būḍhai rūpa diyau hari darasū*. “*Hari*, God gave him his *darśan* in the form of an old man.” 1.8, about the glories of *parama puriṣa paramesura*, the Supreme Lord, occurring after the mention appearance of Bābā Būḍhā, implies a direct association between the two (Jangopal 1988, 35, 91).

through Orr's time (1947, 54-56).⁹⁴ Callewaert quotes H. H. Wilson's "important account" based on verbal information from Kabirpanthias of Benares, that Dādū was "a pupil of one of the Kabir-panthi teachers, ... fifth in descent from Ramananda, namely 1) Kabir; 2) Kamal; 3) Jamal; 4) Bimal; 5) Buddhan; 6) Dadu" (Jangopal 1988, 15-16; Callewaert 1987, 188-89). Thus Callewaert appears to accept this linking of Dādū to Kabir via Buddhan, while side-stepping the question of whether he was Muslim. Orr is more outspoken, calling Sundardās's *Guru Sampradāya* lineage a "roll of imaginary saints," an "imaginative flight" which was concocted to put the new sect on the same footing as the Vaishnava *Sampradāyas*. Orr suggests that since Sundardās's *Sampradāya* never became part of the established tradition, it only proves the point. He speculates that Dādū must have split from his Muslim teacher early in his career since there is no mention of his name in any of Dādū's works (1947, 53-54).

It seems likely that within fifty years⁹⁵ of Dādū's death there was already a trend among Dādū's followers to downplay his lower-caste origins and distance him from his Muslim teacher, that is, to portray him not as an illiterate householder *sant* but a detached, saintly scholar (Gold 1994, 244). Dādū appears to refer to himself in *DV* as a *pinjara*⁹⁶ and a *dhuniyā*,⁹⁷ both terms for a cotton-carder. The earlier manuscripts of *DJL* seem untroubled by these terms. However, Callewaert's study (Jangopal 1988) of the various manuscripts of *DJL* shows that in those sources, references to his family's cotton-carding profession are either dropped⁹⁸ or modified⁹⁹ (18-19). The *DJL* retains numerous references to Dādū carding cotton while discoursing.¹⁰⁰ Eventually, a voice from heaven is said to have ordered Dādū to stop carding cotton, because people who did not know his secret would go to hell for despising him, presumably for being a low-caste cotton-carder (*DJL* 4.5.1-2).

⁹⁴ Caturvedī writes that Orr has established this convincingly, *nirvivād rūp se* (1964, 492). For more on Shaiḥ Buddhan, see Pandey (1992, 180-1), Behl (2007, 178-9).

⁹⁵ Callewaert consulted seven manuscripts, A through G, which he treated as two groups: ACDG form the "earliest version," even though the dates vary from 1653 (A) through 1711 (G); BEF constitute the "revised version," with dates ranging from 1654 (B) to 1700 (F). Thus the earliest of the *DJL* manuscripts with the interpolations, B, is dated 1654, and Dādū passed away in 1603 (Jangopal 1988, 17-18).

⁹⁶ *Tek* (refrain) to *DV pad* 316 (21.3), a first-person lament: *kaṁṇṇa ādaṁmīṁ kaṁmīṇa bicārā, kisa kaṁṇ pūjai garība piṁjārā*. "Who is the lowly, wretched man; whom should the poor cotton-carder worship?" (Callewaert 1991, 1:249; Caturvedī 1966, 455). Nārāyaṇdās's version has *piyārā* instead of *piṁjārā* (2004, 664).

⁹⁷ *Tek* to *DV pad* 375 (24.23): *ko svāmī ko seṣa kahai, isa dhunniye kā maraṁma na koī lahai*. "Who is called a [Hindu] *svāmī*, who, a [Sufi] *Shaiḥ*? No one gets the essence of this cotton-carder." (Callewaert 1991, 1:259; Caturvedī 1966, 477).

⁹⁸ "There was great joy at the house of the cotton-carder (*dhuniyā ke ghari*) [at his birth]" becomes "All, *saba saṁtani*, were overjoyed." (*DJL*.1.6).

⁹⁹ "When [the thief] found only threads [of cotton] (*pāyau suta*) and started to take them away..." gets changed to "When [the thief] started to take away the books and pages (*pothī pānā*)..." (*DJL* 3.9).

¹⁰⁰ E.g., *DJL* 1.16 "He carded cotton," *DJL* 4.3 "he worked as a cotton-carder," *DJL* 4.5 "He never stopped carding cotton, when ordinary people or even kings came to see him."

In some versions Dādū's parents are not named, but in other versions there is an interpolation naming the father as Lodīrām, a Brahman merchant (Jangopal 1988, 19). Dādū's Sufi teacher's name, Buḍḍhan, is initially Bābā Būḍhā, but becomes reinterpreted as the non-Muslim an old man (*būḍhā*) (19-20), which in Sundardās becomes further brahmanized to Vṛddhānanda. In Rāghavdās's *Bhaktamāl* (ca. 1720), biographies of Dādūpanthī *sants*¹⁰¹ occur alongside those of other *sants* and Vaishnava devotees. This trend continues to the present day; Daniel Gold reports, based on field interviews, that Dādūpanthīs now identify themselves as Vaishnavas and are also recognized by others as belonging to a Vaishnava sect (1994, 258).¹⁰² Thiel-Horstmann notes that in Dādūpanthī sermons, too, there is an obvious tendency towards Sanskritization and hence brahmanization (Thiel-Horstmann and Chopra 1989, 179-180).

This brahmanizing trend paradoxically coexists with a certain amount of pride evident among the Dādūpanthīs even today in the fact that Dādū, like Kabir, was respected by both Hindus and Muslims. Two of Dādū's earliest disciples, Rajjab and Bakhnā, were Muslim, as was Vāzind Khān, a later disciple who did not establish a lineage.¹⁰³ There are many verses in the *Dādū Vāṇī* which display Persian and Arabic linguistic features, and even refer to Allah.¹⁰⁴ But this present-day pride of the Dādūpanthīs does not extend to an acceptance of Dādū's Muslim birth, even though Dādū's Muslim parentage was not as much of an issue for at least some of his earlier disciples. Sundardās praises his guru with a verse that begins *eka piṃjārā aisā āyā...*, "Such a cotton carder came..." (Callewaert and de Beeck 1991, 1:563, pad 95.0; Thiel-Horstmann 1983, 5n8). When Rajjab's *Sarvāṅgī* describes the birth of Dādū by the phrase *dhuniyā grahe utpanno Dādū mahāmuni*, the term *dhuniyā* can

¹⁰¹ The term *sant* is difficult to translate. According to Schomer (1987, 2-3) it means 'one who knows the truth' or 'one who has experienced Ultimate Reality' and is extended to also refer to all who seek enlightenment. It goes on to take the generalized senses of 'a good person,' 'a holy man,' a religious teacher. But it also is the historical designation given to the Hindi-speaking and mostly Punjabi and Rajasthani groups of believers in a *nirguṇa* god, a god beyond qualifications. The English 'saint' is a false cognate. For my purposes, I will henceforth leave this term untranslated.

¹⁰² See also Bahuguna's insightful article where he describes Vaishnavization (my term) pressures faced by sects such as the Dādūpanthīs, from sources such as hagiographers, caste hegemony, and "reformer" rulers such as Sawai Jai Singh (r. 1700-1743) who had the sects commit to following Vaishnava *dharma* and forswear caste subversion and contact with Muslims (2009).

¹⁰³ "Wāzind Khān" in Sen (1936, 111). His name does not occur in the lists of Dādū's 52 disciples, e.g. Orr (1947, 234-5) or Nārāyaṇdās (1975, 2:1061-64). But Nārāyaṇdās does have a few sections describing Disciple Vājīnd, a Pathan from Uttar Pradesh and his meeting with Dādū (1975, 2:655-60), and states that the 52 disciples of Dādū were *thāmāyatī*, those who established sub-lineages, while Vājīnd (Vāzind) was among the 100 *virakta*, detached disciples. Caturvedī also includes him a section on other disciples of Dādū (1964, 512-3), as does a collection *Hamāre Muslim Sant Kavi* [Our Muslim *Sant*-poets] (Vānkhare 2002, 66-67).

¹⁰⁴ More on this shortly, in section 3.4.1, "Dādū's familiarity with Islam".

be interpreted as either ‘woman of the cotton-carder caste (*dhuni*),’ or ‘river,’ yielding either the translation “Dādū was born from the womb of a *dhuni* woman,” or “Dādū was found in a river” (Callewaert 1987, 185; 1978, 99; Jangopal 1988, 13).¹⁰⁵ Not surprisingly, the sectarian biographer Svāmī Nārāyaṇdās opts for the latter interpretation, and even argues that a sage can be considered a brahman even if not born from the womb of a brahman, as in the case of Vyāsa and Parāśara (1975, 41). But when a second- or third-generation disciple of Dādū, Bālākrām, writes *asurakul prakaṭe dādū*, rather than the straightforward interpretation, “Dādū was born in the family of *asuras*, i.e., Muslims,” Svāmī Nārāyaṇdās gives the strained interpretation, “Dādū became famous due to quarrels with Muslims,” by interpreting *prakanāt*, “to appear” as “to become famous” (Callewaert 1978, 25n11; Nārāyaṇdās 1975, 1:48-9). Orr reports that the Panth started to emphasize the Hindu elements in Dādū’s thought soon after Dādū’s death, with a trend “in the direction of a return to the fold of Hindu orthodoxy. The enrollment of Muslim adherents ceased with Dadu’s death.” By 1693, the Panth was “to all intent a new Hindu sect” (1947, 196).¹⁰⁶

3.2 Dādū’s Patrons

W. L. Smith, in his book *Patterns in North Indian Hagiography*, writes that “Accounts of meetings between sages and kings seem obligatory in hagiographic literature” (2000, 159). Dādū’s account is no exception, and the sectarian accounts make much of his meeting with the Mughal emperor, Akbar (r. 1556-1605) at Fatehpur Sikri in 1585.¹⁰⁷ In Jangopāl’s *DJL*, three chapters (out of a total of sixteen) describe this meeting (Jangopal 1988, 46-55, 98-104). Dādū had moved to Sāmbhar, which was then ruled by Rājā Bhagvān Dās (r. 1574-90), whose sister Jodh Bāī was Akbar’s Rājput queen. The Rājā is said to have arranged Dādū’s visit to Akbar at the latter’s request. A preliminary visit was held with Rājā Bīrbal and

¹⁰⁵ In Iraqi’s edition of the Sarvāṅgī, the verse reads *dariyā madhye utpanno dādū jogyandro mahāmunīṇi*. (Iraqi 1985, 174, v. 14). But in the preceding verse, it mentions Kabir being born in the womb of a weaver, *julāhā grabhe*, and the following verse, Raidās being born in the womb of a leather-worker, *camāra grabhe*.

¹⁰⁶ My use of Orr (1947) as a source for Dādū Dayāl’s biography might appear outdated. However, as Hastings (2002, 26-7) notes, “Since Orr’s publication, only two western scholars have dealt at any length with Dadu and the Dadu Panth,” these being Winand Callewaert and Monika Thiel-Horstmann, and that “neither has dealt with more than limited portions of Dadupanthi history. The work of both these scholars have been consulted for additional details in this chapter. Callewaert in particular is cited here frequently as Jangopal (1988) and his earlier work on Dādū (1978, 21-56) has also been availed of. Thiel-Horstmann’s focus, as Hastings observes, has been “primarily literary” and also on the social organization of present day Dadupanthi sadhus; her work too has been widely consulted for the present chapter (Thiel-Horstmann 1983; 1986; 1991; 1992; 1997) as well as Thiel-Horstmann and Tilak Raj Chopra (1989). Other sources, of course, have also been consulted where relevant.

¹⁰⁷ *DJL* 16.27 *bayālā*, 1642 V.S. (Jangopāl 1988, 88, 125).

Shaikh Abdul Fazl (var. Abu-l-Fazl), who tested Dādū's wisdom and reported back to Akbar, duly impressed. When Dādū met with Akbar, Akbar too was moved by the exchange with Dādū and requested that Dādū visit him daily for further discussions. But Dādū is said to have curtly refused. Bīrbal and Abdul Fazl suggested that Dādū stay with them and continue the conversations, which lasted either four or forty days.¹⁰⁸ On Bīrbal's intercession, Dādū visited Akbar one more time. Akbar presented Dādū with gifts, which Dādū did not accept. *DJL* reports that Akbar was greatly influenced by his meeting with Dādū and thereafter "stopped hurting living beings" (54, 103, v. 5.25.1). According to Kshitimohan Sen, Akbar subsequently removed his own name from his coins and instead had them issued with *Jalla jalāluhu*, "resplendent is His splendor" on one side, and *Allāhu Akbar*, "God is great" on the other (1936, 111-12). According to Dādūpanthī hagiographies, Bīrbal became Dādū's disciple;¹⁰⁹ he entreated Dādū to stay, and offered him many gifts, as did Bhagvān Dās, but Dādū refused them all and returned to Amber (a.k.a. Āmer).

Orr examined the record of Akbar's life during that period and concluded that "there is ... no difficulty about the supposed date of Dadu's visit. ... It harmonises not only with the outward course of events, but also with what we know of the development of Akbar's religious views" (1947, 57). But he doubts that the event made much of a lasting impression on Akbar and he surmises from Dādū's insistence on returning to Amber, that Dādū too "cherished no such illusion. It may well be that the deepest impression ... was that left on the mind of the faithful Jangopāl" (58). While the lack of supporting evidence from other sources permits no definite conclusion, Orr concludes that the account "has an air of veracity which it is difficult to escape" (58).¹¹⁰

After Rājā Bhagvān Dās's death in 1590, the nephew he had adopted as his son, Mān Singh, became the Rājā of the kingdom of Ḍhūṇḍhahar or Amber (later Jaipur). In *DJL*, Mān Singh (r. 1590-1615), having received complaints about Dādū from brahmans, went to meet Dādū himself. The Rājā was impressed by the meeting but did not want to spoil his relations with the brahmans. When Dādū perceived that Mān Singh wished him to leave his kingdom

¹⁰⁸ Callewaert notes that "if *cārīsā* [forty] is only to rhyme with *bīsā*, it should be understood as *cārī*, 'four'" (Jangopāl 1988, 51n69).

¹⁰⁹ *DJL* 6. 26: "If that is unreal, I'll give it all up and become your disciple;" *DJL* 7.12.2 "he took off his turban and put it at Svāmījī's feet;" *DJL* 8.5 "Bīrbal ... had asked for total protection" (Jangopāl 1988, 51, 56, 59). Nārāyaṇdās includes him in his accounting of Dādū's disciples (1975, 2:1065).

¹¹⁰ There is also no mention of Akbar's meeting with Dādū in Abu-l-Fazl (1897)

and began preparing to do so, the Rājā was fearful that he had offended Dādū. However, Dādū showed the Rājā compassion, and according to an interpolated section (11.8.7, 67),¹¹¹ made Mān Singh his disciple (Jangopal 1988, 67, 112). According to Orr, Dādū later revisited Āmer during his ten-year pilgrimage at the request of the “Rathorani Queen of Amber” who Orr thinks was the wife of either Mān Singh or Bhagvān Dās (1947, 41n1).¹¹² However, in *DJL* 14.7, she is described only as Kanakāvati, queen of Rāṭhor (Jangopal 1988, 76, 117). She too gave Dādū many fine gifts, which he did not keep for himself.

DJL also mentions a lesser king, the Rājā of Bhuraṭiya (vv. 12.1-4, 9-17) and some other noblemen who wished to bestow favors on Dādū, but in all cases Dādū refused to accept them. Thus, the sovereigns Akbar, Bīrbal, Bhagvān Dās, Mān Singh and others were all *potential* patrons. According to *DJL*, Dādū visited with them and impressed them with his understanding of the divine nature, but turned away their gifts of wealth and offers of property. The tradition claims that they accepted Dādū as their guru,¹¹³ or would have done so, but their discipleship is not corroborated by non-sectarian sources. Dādū is portrayed as indifferent to patronage, preferring to not be beholden to anyone but the indweller (*antaryāmī*) Ram (Jangopal 1988, vv. 16, 17.1). Monika Thiel-Horstmann mentions Nārāyaṇ Singh, a rich official (*mansabdār*) from Jobner, who gave land at Narainā to Dādū and his followers, where Dādū is said to have spent his last days (1983, 7). This is the same Nārāin Dās mentioned in *DJL*, who was “ordered by Hari” to take Dādū to Narainā (Jangopal 1988, 80, 120, v.15.9.1-15.11). However, Nārāin Dās is not considered a patron, but rather a devotee who wished to serve Dādū. Nārāyaṇ Singh is listed among the 152 additional disciples of Dādū by Svāmī Nārāyaṇḍās (Nārāyaṇḍās 1975, 2:1067).

3.3 Hagiographic Tropes in Dādū’s Life

In his book *Patterns in North Indian Hagiography*, W. L. Smith enumerates common tropes that tend to occur in hagiographical works: 1) descent; 2) childhood exploits (*bālya līlā*); 3) marriage; 4) renouncing the world; 5) appearance, personality, and powers; 6) visitation (*darśan*); 7) virtuous company (*satsaṅg*); 8) widespread fame (*digvijaya*);

¹¹¹ *DJL* 11.8.7.

¹¹² Orr does not cite specific sections of the *Janma Līlā* and may have misconstrued the identity of this queen.

¹¹³ Nārāyaṇḍās, in his *Śrī Dādū Caritāmṛta*, after listing the canonical 52 disciples of Dādū, goes on to enumerate 213 additional *śiṣyas*, disciples. Some items in the list are comprised of multiple persons whose names and numbers are not known. Rājā Bhagvāṇḍās, Akbar, Bīrbal, Abdul Fazl, Rājā Mān Singh and virtually everyone that Dādū is reported to have come in contact with are included in the list (1975, 2:1064-67).

9) meeting the emperor; 10) enemies; 11) brahman opposition; 12) temptation, sin and salvation; 13) “hard,” i.e., strong devotion (*bhakti*); and 14) ascent to heaven (*svargārohaṇa*) (2000, iii). All but one of these tropes play a prominent role in *DJL*.¹¹⁴ I have already mentioned that Dādū was considered an incarnation of God (*avatār*) at birth (section 3.1), as well as his meetings with royalty (section 3.2). Dādū’s remarkable childhood is implied in the account of his meeting at the age of eleven with his teacher, Bābā Būḍhā (who Jangopāl suggests is none other than the Supreme Lord (*paramesura*), see n. 88 above): while all the other children ran away, only Dādū approached him, and gave him a gift. Jangopāl, suggesting that Dādū was destined for greatness, comments, “if a child shows such intelligence, what love will he be capable of later?” (*DJL* 1.8). When Dādū was eighteen, Hari (God) appeared again to him, completing the transformation initiated at their meeting seven years earlier. As an illustration of the trope of renunciation, Dādū “was turned out of the house” for giving everything away, “he became indifferent to the world ... detached from wealth and sexuality, he spent all his time in merciful acts” (*DJL* 1.12.2-15). There is no explicit mention of his marriage, other than references to his wife and mother-in-law (*DJL* 3.10), and to his four children, two sons and two daughters (*DJL* 9.1-7). An interpolation states that his children were born miraculously, “as Kamāl was born to Kabir,”¹¹⁵ from two cloves and two peppercorns which he gave to his wife (*DJL* 9.1.1-2). When asked by Rājā Mān Singh about his views on sex and marriage, Dādū replied, “I do not impose or forbid marriage; each individual should choose the nectar or the poison” (*DJL* 10.19). Because he “ignored all Muslim customs and abandoned Hindu practices,” Dādū drew the ire of both Hindus and Muslims (2.5,7). Several events illustrate Dādū’s powers. Dādū warned a Qāzī who had hit him that his “hand will go on aching,” and the Qāzī “died in great suffering, but full of repentance” three months later (2.14-17). The house of another Qāzī who wished to harm Dādū burned down (3.1-5). On multiple occasions, Dādū fed his followers by miraculously providing food (8.17.1-3, 9.12.1-3, 14.18.2), even posthumously during the month-long commemoration events after his death (16.14). The following incidents may be

¹¹⁴ For a tabular representation of which hagiographic tropes are present/absent in the case of Dādū Dayāl, see section 3.7 where his hagiographic representation is compared to that of Nīscaldās.

¹¹⁵ While there are stories about the birth of Kamāl, e.g., (Caturvedī 1964, 166-7; Abbott and Godbole 1982, 1:93-95; Lorenzen 1991, 50-52), I have been unable to locate a corroboration of his miraculous birth in a manner similar to that of Dādū’s children.

viewed as illustrations of Dādū's powers as well as examples of the trope of *darśan*: When Dādū was beaten and locked up, he appeared both inside and outside the prison (3.12-17). Later, he was present simultaneously at seven celebrations in his honor (3.18,21). His subtle body travelled to "an infinite variety of worlds" (8.23.6). An example of brahman opposition: When Dādū was staying in Āmer, the brahmans were afraid that he would win over Rājā Mān Singh and so they complained. Mān Singh, in order to retain the brahmans' favor, hinted that Dādū had stayed there too long, so Dādū decided to leave. But Mān Singh feared that he would suffer the wrath of the Almighty as a consequence, so to appease Mān Singh's fears, Dādū made him his disciple and then left (11.2-8). Dādū's "conquest of the four quarters" (*digvijaya*) was mostly restricted to Rajasthan. A year before his death, Dādū received a sign foretelling his end (15.7) and moved to Narāinā (present day Narenā / Narainā) in preparation. On his passing, when his body was moved to Bhairānā (present day Bhairānā), it miraculously disappeared "like camphor" (15.31.2). There are numerous references to Dādū's "hard *bhakti*," forsaking everything for devotion and service to holy men (*DJL* 1.12, 1.12.1-3, 1.14-16), but no instances of Dādū ever having personally faced temptation or sin.

3.4 The *Dādū Vāṇī* on Religion and Caste

Tradition relates that Dādū did not write anything himself; his utterances were either memorized (*magaziyā*) or recorded (*kāgaziyā*), and were collected as the *Dādū Vāṇī* (*DV*) by some of his disciples, mainly Mohan Daftarī, Rajjab, Ṭīlā, Jagannāth and Sant Dās (Orr 1947, 80-81; Nārāyaṇdās 1975, 2:1012; Caturvedī 1966, 17). The language of the *DV* predominantly comprises Braj, Mārwarī and Jaipurī, but Gujarati, Khaṛī Bolī, Sanskrit, Persian and Rekhtā, Arabic, Marathi, Punjabi, Sindhi and Sarāī¹¹⁶ word and phrases are also found (Nārāyaṇdās 1975, 2:1051-54). The text is divided into two sections, the *sākhī*, "religious didactic distich" portion consisting of 37 chapters (*aṅga*) with a total of 2453

¹¹⁶ Nārāyaṇdās parenthetically explains Sarāī as the language of the region between Sindh and Punjāb, *sindh aur pañjāb ke bīc kī [bhāṣā]* (1975, 2:1051), but does not provide any examples, whereas he does for Gujarati, *tadbhav* Hindi, *miśrit bhāṣā*, Marathi, Punjabi and Farsi instances (2:1052-3). Sarāī may be the same as Śarāikī, considered a dialect of Sindhi, and also of Punjabi. Sarāikī or Shāhmukhī is "a member of the Lahnda branch of Indo-Aryan languages and spoken by about 14 million people mainly in the central Pakistan provinces of Sindh and Punjab, and also in India, mainly in the state of Punjab, and in parts of Afghanistan," according to Omniglot.com. It is also known as Multani or Lahndi.

verses (*sākhī*),¹¹⁷ and the religious song (*pada*)¹¹⁸ portion organized in 28 chapters, 27 of which are organized by musical structures (*rāga*), and the final chapter consisting of songs of praise (*ārati*), with a total of 443 *padas* (Thiel-Horstmann 1983, 8-10; Callewaert and de Beeck 1991, 1:13-14). In this section, I present a small selection to provide a sense of Dādū's views on religion and caste. All the *DV* verse references are to the critical edition by Callewaert (1991). The corresponding verse numbering and location from Nārāyaṇdās's edition will be provided with the notation *DV*^N when available (2004). All translations are mine unless stated otherwise.

3.4.1 Dādū's Familiarity with Islam

Dādū's works reveal great familiarity with Muslim and Sufi concepts. For instance, the much quoted *DV sākhī* 3.137:

Āsika māsūka hvai gayā, isaka kahāvai soī;
Dādū usa māsūka kā, alaha āsika hoī.

When the lover has become the beloved, then alone is it called love;
O Dādū, God becomes the lover of that beloved.

Or the first part of the *tek*, refrain of *DV pad* 84 (2.14):

baṇḍe hāzīrā hazūri ve, alaha āle nūr ve.

O Slave, He is the highest present, He is God, the highest light"
(Callewaert 1991, 1:143,213; Caturvedī 1966, 41, 344).

The following selections, from *paracā kā aṅga*, the section on proof/knowledge (*paricaya*), is another example of Dādū's familiarity with Islam and the way he mixes Arabic and Persian with occasional Sanskrit words (1963, 184-5):¹¹⁹

Dādū hauda hazūrī, dila hi bhūtari gusala hamārā sārām;
Ojū sāji alaha ke āgaiṃ, tahāṃ nivāza guzārām
(*DV* 4.211, p. 148; *DV*^N 4.226. p. 134).

Dādū, the reservoir of His presence is within [my] heart, I perform my complete

¹¹⁷ A *sākhī* is the term often used to describe *dohās* of Kabir and other *sant* poets, two lines of 13+11 syllables each (Greene et al. 2012, 689).

¹¹⁸ A *pada* is a devotional poem or song of "from four to eight lines (but often extended to several more), all having the same metrical structure and frequently the same rhyme. Often the lyrics begin with a shorter line that in performance serves as a refrain" (Greene et al. 2012, 689).

¹¹⁹ For alternate translations of these verses, see Orr (1947, 99) and Chand (1963, 184-5). Chand bases his translation on Sudhākar Dvivedī's edition of *DV* (Dayāl 1906), and there are subtle variations besides the verse numbering.

ablutions there;
After washing my hands and feet, I say the prayers there before Allah.

*Dādū kāyā masīti kari, pañca jamātī mana hī mulā imāmaṇ;
Āpa aleṣa ilāhī āgaiṇ, tahām sijadā karai salāmaṇ (DV 4.212).*

Dādū makes his body His mosque, he finds in [his own] mind the five members of the congregation (*jamā'at*) and the leader of the prayers (*mullā'imām*);
He bows and greets the indescribable God, who Himself is before him.

*Dādū saba tana tasabī kahai, karīmaṇ aisā kari le jāpaṇ;
Rozā eka dūri kari dūjā, kalamā āpai āpaṇ (DV 4.213).*

Dādū regards the whole body as the rosary (*tasbīḥ*) on which the name of the Generous One (*karīm*) is repeated;
There is but one fast (*rozā*), shun any other. He himself is the profession of faith (*kalamā*).

*Dādū aṭhe pahara alaha ke āgaiṇ, ika ṭaga rahivā dhyānaṇ;
Āpai āpa arasa ke ūpari, jahām rahai rahimānaṇ (DV 4.214).*

Thus Dādū remains ever before Allah with one-pointed concentration,
And himself goes beyond the heavens (*ars'*) to the place where *Rahmān* (the Merciful) lives.

*Aṭhe pahara ivāvatī, jīvaṇa maraṇa nivāhi;
Sāhiba dari sevai ṣaḍā, dādū chāḍi na jāi (DV 4.215).*

Dādū the worshipper (*ibādatī*) continues thus twenty-four hours a day till his death,
And then he will stand before the gates of the Master and never leave him.

These verses are replete with Islamic terms and conventions such as the Persian supplication, entreaty or prayer (*nivāz, niāz*),¹²⁰ ritual worship and adoration (*'ibādat*), ritual ablutions (*gusala*) in a bathing tank or reservoir (*haud, hauz*), a prayer congregation (*jamā'at*) led by a priest (*mullā, maulā*) or minister of a mosque (*imām*), prostration in prayerful adoration (*sijdā, sājid, sajjād*), praying the rosary (*tasabī, tasbīḥ*), the Muslim confession of faith, “There is no god but God, *lā ilāha illa 'l-lāh*,” (*kalamā, kalma. kalimat*), keeping the fast during the month of Ramazan (*rozā*), and Arabic words for God, such as Supreme Being (*alaha, allāh, al ilāh*), the Divine (*ilāhī*), the Generous (*karīm*), the Merciful (*rahmān*), and for heaven (*'ars'*).

¹²⁰ Nārāyaṇdās, in his edition (2004, 134, v. 4.223), gives *namāza* in place of *nivāza* and Dvivedi, *nimāja* (Dayāl 1906, 55, v. 4.221).

Rather tellingly, Dādū does not consider the Muslim as “the Other.” In *sāc kā aṅga*, the section on truth, he describes the attributes of a Muslim:¹²¹

*Dādū musalmāṇṇa ju rāṣai māṇa, sāmī kā mānai jhuraṁāṇṇā;
Sārauṇ kauṇ suṣadāi hoi, musalamāna kari jāṇṇauṇ soi*
(*DV* 13.25, p. 167; *DV*^N 13.28. p. 264).

Dādū, the Muslim who shows respect and accepts the Lord’s penalty,
who gives happiness to all, he alone I consider a Muslim.

*Dādū musalamāna mihiri gahi rahai, saba kūṇ suṣa kisahī nahīṇ dahe;
Mūvā na ṣāi jīva nahīṇ māre karai, bandagī rāha saṁvārai* (*DV* 13.26).

A Muslim displays compassion, gives happiness to all and doesn’t distress anyone,
He does not eat the dead, does not kill living beings, and follows the path of
devotion.

*Dādū so momina mana maiṇ kari jāṇi, sata sabūri vaise āṇṇi;
Cālai sāca saṁvārai vāṭa, tinakū ṣule bhista ke pāṭa* (*DV* 13.27).

That (Muslim) believer brings truth and patience into his heart and knows;
He acts truthfully and prepares the path; for him the doors of paradise (*bahiṣṭ*) open.

*Dādū so momina moma dila hoi, sāmī kūṇ pahicānai soi;
Zora na karai harāma na ṣāi, so momina bhirita maiṇ jāi* (*DV* 13.28).

That believer is compassionate, he alone recognizes the Lord;
He is not violent, he does not accept what is ill-begotten; that believer
goes to paradise.

There is nothing in these attributes that is specific to practitioners of the Muslim faith. The list reads like any enumeration of virtues to be aspired to in any faith.¹²² Dādū is thus implying that though he is intimately familiar with Muslim practices, for him the label “Muslim” as conventionally understood to mean a person who follows certain beliefs and practices is not significant compared to cultivating the attributes such as compassion, kindness, non-violence, etc. This would also suggest that for one who possesses these attributes, whether she be called Muslim or Hindu is unimportant.

¹²¹ For alternative translations see Thiel-Horstmann (1983, 94).

¹²² For example, compare this with enumeration of Divine Virtues (*daivī-sampadā*) in *BhG* 16.1-3, listed in Ch. 8, n. 572 on p. 258 (*VP* 8.109).

3.4.2 Dādū on Hindus and Muslims

When it comes to Hindus and Muslims, Dādū suggests that such categorization is contrived and irrelevant from the standpoint of non-duality:

*Dādū ekai alaha rāma hai, saṃmratha sāmī soi;
Maide ke pakavāṃna saba, khātāṃ hoi sa hoi (DV 2.18, p. 136; DV^N 2.20, p. 37).*

Oh Dādū! Ram, Allah, Emperor, Lord, [these names] are one and the same;
All fried bread is made of finely ground flour, the result of eating [their products]
is the same.

*Dādū saba hama deṣyā sodhi, saba ḍusara nāṃhī āṃna;
Saba ghaṭi ekai ātamāṃ, kyā hīndū kyā musalamāṃna
(DV 29.4, p. 191; DV^N 29.5, p. 428).*

Dādū, investigating everything, I have seen [that] there is no second;
There is only one *ātmā* in all bodies; what is a Hindu, what is a Muslim?

*Alaha rāma chūṭi gayā bhraṃma morā;
Hīndū turaka bheda kachū nāṃhīṃ; deṣūṃ darasaṃna torā
(DV 56.0, p. 209; DV^N 1.65.0, p. 508).*

My false notion [that] Allah and Ram [are different] has disappeared;
There is no difference between a Hindu and a Muslim, I see [only] your image.

Another selection, titled¹²³ *hīndū musalmānoṃ kā bhram*, “Erroneous distinctions between Hindus and Muslims” in *DV^N*, makes the point directly:

*Dādū hīndū mārāga kahem hamārā, turaka kahaiṃ raha merī;
Kaṃṇaṃ pantha hai kaho alaṣa kā, tuma to aisī herī
(DV 13.43, p. 167; DV^N 13.48, p. 268).*

Dādū, the Hindus say, “ours is the way,” the Muslims say “ours [is];”
Tell me which is the way of the Ultimate? You however have sought such [quarrels].

*Dādū duī daroga loga kaṃṇ bhāvai, sāmī sāca piyārā;
Kaṃṇa pantha hama calai kaho dhaṃṇ, sādho karau vicārā (DV 13.44; DV^N 13.49).*

People cultivate duality and falsehood, [but] the Lord is the true Beloved;
In truth (*dhaṃṇ*), O sages, reflect and tell me which way should I follow.

*Ṣaṇḍa ṣaṇḍa kari brahmakūṃ, paṣi paṣi līyā vāṃṭi;
Dādū pūraṇa brahma taji, bandhe bhraṃma kī gāṇṭhi (DV 13.45; DV^N 13.50).*

Breaking Brahman into pieces, and distributing them (the pieces) among the factions,
Forsaking the complete Brahman, they have tied the knots of false ideas.¹²⁴

¹²³ These sub-section titles are considered a later addition and are not included in the *DV* edition.

¹²⁴ For an alternate translation of this verse, see Orr (1947, 161).

Dādū does not think highly of either Hindu or Muslim religious teachers, as this couplet shows:

*Dādū jihi variyām yahu sabkachū bhayā, soṃkachū karau vicāra;
Kāzī paṇḍita bāvare, kyā liṣi bandhe bhāra* (DV 18.36, p. 177; DV^N 18.37, p. 342).

Contemplate a bit on the time when all this [creation] came into being,
O crazy qazis and pandits, what a burden you have imposed by [your] writing.

In fact, Dādū is critical of all religious groups, not just Hindus and Muslims:

*Jogī jaṃgama sevaḍe, bodha saṃnyāsī seṣa;
Ṣaṭ darasana dādū rāṃma vina, sabai kapaṭa ke bheṣa*
(DV 14.31, p. 170; DV^N 14.33, p. 296).

Yogis, wandering Śaivas, Jains (*sevaḍe*), Buddhists, renunciates, Sufis (sheikhs),
The six Hindu systems of philosophy, all are hypocrisy without Ram.¹²⁵

Dādū describes his affiliation as being beyond Hindu and Muslim. According to the Dādūpanthī scholar and hagiographer Nārāyaṇdās, the following verses are Dādū's response to Akbar's inquiry about whether he allied himself with the Hindus or the Muslims or one of the six systems of philosophy:

*Dādū hīndū turaka na hoivā, sāhiva setī kāma;
Ṣaṭ darasana kai saṃgi na jāivā, nṛpaṣa kahivā rāṃma*
(DV 16.42, p. 175; DV^N 16.36, p. 326).

Dādū is neither Hindu nor Muslim, he works with the Lord;
He doesn't affiliate with the six systems; Ram is impartial.

*Ṣaṭ darasana dūnyūṃ nahīm, nirālamba nija vāṭa;
Dādū yekai āsirai, laṃghe oghaṭa ghāṭa* (DV 16.43; DV^N 16.37).

Dādū is neither of the six systems nor both [Hindu and Muslim]; taking refuge in the one and only independent, true way, he crosses the difficult mountain pass.

*Dādū nām hama hīndū hūṃhiṃge, nām hama musalamāna;
Ṣaṭ darasana meṃ hama nahīm, hama rate rahimāṃna* (DV 16.44; DV^N 16.38).

Dādū will be neither Hindu nor Muslim,
He is not of the six systems, he is in love with the Merciful [God].

*Na tahām hīndū dehurā, na tahām turaka masīti;
Dādū āpai āpa hai, nahīm tahām raha rīti* (DV 16.45; DV^N 16.44¹²⁶).

¹²⁵ For an alternate translation of this verse, see Upadhyaya (1979, 210, v. 462).

There is no Hindu temple or Muslim mosque there,
Dādū says [Ram is self-existent],¹²⁷ there are no rites [where He dwells].¹²⁸

Dādū alaha rāṃma kā dvai paṣa taiṃ nyārā;
Rahitā guṇa ākāra kā, so gurū hamārā (DV 16.46; DV^N 16.39).

That which is distinct from the two factions of Allah and Ram,
Devoid of attributes and form, that is my guru.

Dādū is equally critical of both Hindu and Muslim practices and does not value the study
of scripture, which he considers empty of praxis:^{129, 130}

*Dādū rūnā ghaṭa sodhī nahīm, paṇḍita brahmāpūta;*¹³¹
*Āgama nīgama saba kathai, ghara meṃ nācai bhūta*¹³²
(DV 13.84, p. 168; DV^N 13.87, p. 275).

Oh Dādū! Sound¹³³ is not found in the vessel; pandits, sons of Brahmā
Recite all the sacred texts, [while] ghosts dance in [their] houses.

Paḍheṃ na pāvai parma gati, paḍhe na laṃghe pāra;
Paḍhe na pahumcai prāṇiyām, dādū pīḍi pukāra (DV 13.85; DV^N 13.88).

They recite but don't attain the highest state, they don't cross over
[worldly existence];
Reciting, the beings don't arrive, calling out in grief.

Dādū paṇḍita nibare nāmva vina, jhūṭhe kathai giyāna;
Baiṭhe sira ṣālīm karaiṃ, paṇḍita veda purāmna (DV 13.86; DV^N 13.89).

Oh Dādū, the pandits are empty without the Name, they speak of false knowledge;
Sitting with empty heads, the pandits recite the Vedas and *purāṇas*.

Dādū kete pustaka paḍhi mue, paṇḍita veda purāmna;
*Kete brahmā*¹³⁴*kathi gae, nāmḥina rāṃma samāmna (DV 13.87; DV^N 13.90).*

¹²⁶ This verse occurs out of sequence in DV^N.

¹²⁷ My thanks to Dr. M. Shapiro for drawing my attention to the sense of *āpa* indicating God, the Lord, Brahman, Ram similar to its usage in the Sikh *Guru Granth Sāhib*, e.g., “*thāpiā na jāikītāna hoi; āpe āpa nirañjanu soi*. The Lord cannot be installed, nor created, He is pure by Himself” (*Jap jī*, 5.1).

¹²⁸ For an alternate translation of this verse, see Upadhyaya (1979, 216, v. 482).

¹²⁹ DV^N has one more verse, 13.95, which appears later in DV as 13.94 – I have not included it here. The selection 13.87-95 is titled “*karaṇī binā kathanī*, Saying Without Doing” in DV^N.

¹³⁰ There is another delightful *pada* that I am not including in this section for reasons of brevity, but it bears mentioning: *avigati kī gati ko na lahai...*, “No one gets the nature of the Ultimate Being,” DV 228, pp. 235-6; DV^N 9.31(244), p. 610.

¹³¹ Callewaert (1991, 168) has *brahyāpūta* which is quite obviously a Devanāgarī typo for *brahmāpūta*, ब्रह्म instead of ब्रह्म (Caturvedī 1966, 157).

¹³² Callewaert (op. cit) has *bhata*; I am following Caturvedī instead.

¹³³ I take *rūnā* as *rūṇa*, meaning *śabda*, *āvāz*, “sound” according to the RĤSK (2:1171 s.v). The etymology of this word, however, is not provided. DV^N has *sūnā*, “empty, unoccupied” instead.

Reciting [from] so many books, Vedas and *purāṇas*, the pandits died;
So many Brahmās (wise sages) [also] have said and gone: there is nothing
comparable to Ram.

Dādū saba hama deṣyā sodhi kari, veda purāṇaṁ māṁhi;
Jahāṁ niraṁjana pāṭe, so desa dūri ita nāhiṁ (DV 13.88; DV^N 13.91).

I have investigated in all the Vedas and *purāṇas*,
The place where one shall find the Faultless is not distant from here.

Dādū kāzī kazā na jāṁṇāhīṁ, kāgada hāthi kateva;
Paḍhatāṁ paḍhatāṁ dina gae, bhītari nāhī bheda (DV 13.89; DV^N 13.92).

The qazi does not know the divine decree (*qazā*), [even though] he keeps papers
and scripture at hand;
Days have passed in reading incessantly, yet no change occurs within [the qazi].

Masi kāgada kai āsirai, kyūṁ chūṭai saṁsāra;
Rāṁma binā sūjhai nahīṁ, dādū bharama vikāra (DV 13.90; DV^N 13.93).

How will one be released from worldly life on the basis of ink and paper?
O Dādū, without Ram, one will not understand the erroneous notions and distortions.

Kāgada kāle kare mue, kete veda purāṇna;
Ekai aṣira pīva kā, dādū paḍhai sujāna (DV 13.91; DV^N 13.94).

So many have died, blackening paper with the Vedas and *purāṇas*;
The wise read just one letter of the Beloved[’s name], O Dādū!

For Dādū, scripture cannot do justice to the *nirguṇa*, that which is beyond words:

Je kachu veda kurāṁṇa thaiṁ, agama agocara bāta;
So anabhai sēcā kahai, yahu dādū akaha kahāta
(DV 4.189 p. 148; DV^N 4.203, p. 129).

Whatever topic from the Vedas and Quran that is impenetrable and imperceptible,
It is known to be true by experience; this, Dādū, is called the ineffable.

And yet again:

Dādū soī māraga mana gahyā, jihi māraga milie jāī;
Beda kurāṇau nā kahyā, so gura dīyā diṣāi (DV 1.79 p. 134; DV^N 1.80, p. 15).

The mind has caught hold of the way, by which one finds [Ram].
The guru has shown that which the Vedas and Quran did not tell [of].

¹³⁴ Callewaert again has *brahya*, see n. 131 above.

Thus, for Dādū, not only is there only one God – the Beloved (*piyāra, pīva*), the complete Brahman, Ram – and there is no other, a vision of uncompromising non-duality. Hindus and Muslims, or for that matter any religious groups or even systems of philosophy (*darśana*) are all wrong. Therefore, it is meaningless to speak of differences between any of them. All priests and sacred texts of any religious tradition are empty of knowledge of the non-dual Brahman which is without attributes (*nirguṇa*) and is beyond words.

3.4.3 Dādū on Caste (*Jāti*)

Concerning caste (*jāti*), Dādū states, in a section titled (in *DV^N*) “the removal of erroneous notions on caste and status” (*jāti pāṁti bhram vidhvaṁsana*):

*Apanī apanī jāti saṁ, sabakoṁ vesai pāṁti;
Dādū sevaga rāṁma kā, tākai nahīm bhaṁrāti*
(*DV* 13.107 p. 169; *DV^N* 13.110, p. 279).

Each is enamored with one’s own caste, all [of the same caste] sit in a line [together];
Dādū, a servant of Ram does not have [such an] erroneous notion.¹³⁵

*Dādūlīlā rājā rāṁma kī, śelaiṁ sabahī saṁta;
Āpā para yekai bhae, chūṭī sabai bharaṁta* (*DV* 13.108).¹³⁶

O Dādū, all the sages play the *līlā*, divine play of King Ram;
The highest self is only one, all the erroneous notions have disappeared.

*Sāpa gayā sahināṁṇa koṁ, saba mili mārāiṁ loka;
Dādū aise deṣie, kula kā ḍagarā phoka* (*DV* 13.109; *DV^N* 13.113).

The snake is gone, [yet] the people gather and beat the tracks
[left behind by the snake],
The way (*ḍagara*) of caste by birth should similarly be seen as worthless (*phoka*),
Dādū.

*Dādū sūpa bajāyāṁ kyūṁ ṭalai, ghara maim baḍī balāi;
Kāla jhāla isa jīva kā, bātani hīm kyūṁ jāi* (*DV* 13.110; *DV^N* 13.112).

O Dādū, how can one avert a great calamity in the house
by fanning a winnowing basket (*sūp bajānā*)?
Death is the flame for this living being, why should it go [away] merely from talking?

¹³⁵ Orr translates this as “Each sits in the company of his caste-fellows; The servant of Rama knows no such distinctions” (1947, 161, v 13:123). [Orr’s verse citations are to the 1907 Ajmer text of the Dādū Vāṇī edited by Candrikā Prasād Tripāthī, which I was unable to locate].

¹³⁶ *DV^N* has a different verse here.

*Dādū dūnyūṃ bharaṃma haiṃ, hīndū turaka gaṃvāra;
Je duhuvāṃtaiṃ rahata haiṃ, so gahi tata vicāra (DV 13.111; DV^N 13.114).*

O Dādū, the concepts of ‘Hindu’ and ‘Muslim’ both are foolish erroneous notions.
Catch hold of the truth which is without both [notions] and contemplate it.

*Apaṇā apaṇā kari līyā, bhaṃjana māṃhaiṃ bāhi;
Dādū ekai kūpajala, mana kā bharaṃma uṭhāi (DV 13.112; DV^N 13.115).*

Each has made the erroneous mental notion his own, O Dādū,
Like taking the water from the same well and filling it into [different] vessels.¹³⁷

*Dādū pāṇṇī ke vahu nāṃva dhari, nānā vidhi kī jāti;
Volaṇahārā koṃṇa hai, kahau dhaum kahā samāti (DV 13.113; DV^N 13.116).*

Dādū, the different kinds of castes are like giving many [different] names to water;
But who speaks [these names], indeed, where does It reside?¹³⁸

*Jaba pūraṇa brahma vicāriye, taba sakala ātamā eka;
Kāyā ke guṇa dekhiye, to nānā varaṇa aneka (DV^N 13.117).¹³⁹*

When Brahman is considered as a whole, then all the *ātmās* are one;
If the *guṇas*¹⁴⁰ of the body are seen, then there are endless different classes.¹⁴¹

Clearly, for Dādū, caste (*jāti*) is an erroneous notion. Dādū repeats the one water/many forms analogy (*DV* 13.113) that we saw in the section 3.4.1 in connection with the irrelevance of Hindu/Muslim distinctions (*DV* 29.4). In the *sāragrāhī aṅga*, “the chapter on getting hold of the essence,” Dādū suggests that if one must think in terms of caste, it ought to be considered as follows:

*Dādū karaṇī ūpari jāti hai, dūjā soca nivāri;
Māilī madhima hvai, ujala ūṃca vicāri (DV 17.12, p. 176; DV^N 17.13, p. 333).*

¹³⁷ Orr: “Each has filled his vessel with water and called it his own; The water of the One Well dispels error from the mind” (1947, 161, v 13:128?). [Orr provides four verses but only cites three, so the verse number here is tentative].

¹³⁸ Orr: “They have given the water many names, they have formed many different castes; Say, who is the Speaker, and where is He contained?” (1947, 161, v 13:129?). [This verse citation is also tentative, see n. 137].

¹³⁹ This verse is not included in *DV*, but I have included it here from *DV^N* because I think it reinforces the point made thus far.

¹⁴⁰ These are the *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas* attributes. Cf. *BhG* 18.41, *brāhmaṇa-kṣatriya-viśāṃ sūdrāṇāṃ... karmāṇi pravibhaktāni svabhāva-prabhavair guṇaiḥ*.

¹⁴¹ Orr: “When thou considerest the complete Brahma[n], then are all spirits one; When thou lookest on bodily attributes, there are castes many and diverse” (1947, 161, v 13:130).

Dādū, caste depends on deeds, let go of any other thinking [on this matter];
Consider [those who perform] foul deeds to be [of] mediocre [caste],
[and those who perform] pure deeds, high caste.

Ujala karaṇī rāṃma hai, dādū dūjā dhaṃdha;
Kā kahie samajhai nahīm, cāryūṃ locana aṃdha (DV 17.13; DV^N 17.14).

The deed beyond reproach is [contemplating & worshipping] Ram, all else is
worldly activity.

What can I say, folks don't understand – all [their] four eyes¹⁴² are blind.

Rather than considering caste in terms of birth and family lineage, Dādū suggests that it be
based on one's deeds alone. It is what is within oneself that matters:

Dādū bāhara kā saba deṣie, bhītari laṣyā na jāi;
Bāhari diṣāvā loka kā, bhītari rāṃma diṣāi (DV 14.36, p. 170; DV^N 14.38, p. 296).

Everyone sees what's on the outside, the inside is not seen;
The outside show is for the world, show what's inside to Ram.¹⁴³

We see that for Dādū, in the light of non-duality, similar to religious identity, caste-consciousness too is an erroneous notion (*bhrama*), akin to seeing a non-existent snake in a rope. From the standpoint of indivisible Brahman (*pūraṇa=pūrṇa brahma*), there is only one *ātmā*; to think in terms of caste (*jāti*) and class (*varṇa*), shows that one does not see the true nature of reality. Rather than considering conventional markers of caste such as heredity, the true measure of a human being is revealed by how she acts. When one further sees the true nature of creation, that all is nothing but Brahman, any distinction based on religion or caste is meaningless.

3.5 Dādū's Disciples Rajjab and Sundardās and Their Views

According to Thiel-Horstmann, “Dādū was not destined to enrich or revive Sant poetry. His merit it [...] was, however, to have instigated some of the most brilliant of his disciples to activities by which the sect gained fame, such as the compilatory activities of Rajjab, the rich philosophical works of Sundardās, ...” (1983, 10). Regarding caste, however, the views of Sundardās and Rajjab were not dissimilar from Dādū's, and in what follows in this section, I provide a brief summation of their views based upon a sampling of their works.

¹⁴² Nārāyaṇās explains “four eyes” as *vivek*, discrimination, *vicār*, contemplation, and *donoṃ bāhya netra*, both external eyes (2004, 333).

¹⁴³ For an alternate translation, see Upadhyaya (1979, 210, v. 463).

Rajjab (1567?-1689 CE) is said to have been born to a Muslim Paṭhān family and is considered to have influenced Sundardās. According to Orr, Dādū “is said to have treated him [Rajjab] more as an equal than as a disciple” (1947, 209). He is also considered to be one of the compilers and arrangers of the *Dādū Vāṇī* (80). In Callewaert’s critical edition of a selection of 848 distichs (*sākhī*) written by Rajjab in his *Sarvāṅgī* (1978), there are very few *sākhīs* that deal with the issues of religion and caste. I reproduce these here, with Callewaert’s translations.

In verses from the chapter on remembrance, *sumiran kā aṅg*, we see themes similar to those evident in Dādū’s work, such as the irrelevance of being Hindu or Muslim, the one water/many drops analogy, and God transcending names:

*Nāṃī lāgi nara nisatarai, hiṃdū musalamāṃna;
Ubhai ṭhaura ekai kahī, rajaba beda kurāna. SAR 17.40, p. 129.*

Both the Vedas and the Quran proclaim the same principle: Whether Hindu or Muslim, a person will cross the ocean [of rebirth] if he clings to the Name (203).

*Nāṃva anekahu eka guna, jyūṃ bahu būṃdahūṃ bāri;
Jana rajaba jāṃni ra kahī, nara niraṣau su nihāri. SAR 17.41.*

Listen and reflect upon what I tell you from my true knowledge: although we give Him many Names, His reality is one, as there are many drops in one and the same water.

*Jyūṃ ātama aravāha ika tyūṃ hī rāṃma rahīma;
Udika āba kachū dvaī nahīṃ rajaba samajhi phahīma. SAR 17.42.*

Ātam and *aravāh* are just two synonyms for soul, and *udik* and *āb* both mean water; Rajab has understood this: Ram and Rahīm are two names for one God.

In verses from *bhajan pratāp kā aṅg*, the chapter on the glory of prayer, Rajjab, like Dādū, speaks of the insignificance of family origin, i.e., caste:¹⁴⁴

*Jāti pāṃti kula saba gaye, rāṃma nāṃma kai raṃga;
Rajaba lāgai loha jyūṃ, pārasa kā parasamga. SAR 22.8, p. 134.*

All the evil effects of a [low] birth and bad company can be erased by the color of the Name of God (*rām*), as all the <properties>¹⁴⁵ of iron are changed when it is touched by the philosophers’ stone (215).

¹⁴⁴ Again, the translations are primarily Callewaert’s, my modifications are enclosed in < >.

*Dīragha kula su aterū, būḍai laghu kula tārika tārai;
So rajaba guna kaisai metai, jāsau jalanidhi pārai. SAR 22.9.*

A man of a noble family gets drowned if he cannot swim, but a swimmer of low origin gets across; nothing can diminish the quality [of the Name] by which one gets across the ocean [of rebirth].

*Kaḍavī mūṭhī tum̐bikā, āmba nība kī nāva;
Rajaba tiriye caḥūṁ caḍhi, tau kula kī ora na āva. SAR 22.10.*

Does it matter whether a boat is made of the wood of a sweet or of a sour gourd plant, of the mango tree or of a lemon tree? You may climb in each of them and get across: honour is not given to the origin (216).

*Nīmba dhaturai āka viṣa, madhu nikasai una māṁhi;
Rajaba viṣa amṛta bhayā, tau kula kārana koī nāṁhi. SAR 22.11*

There is poison in the *neem* tree, the thorn-apple tree and the swallow-wort plant, yet their flowers produce honey; we can [in analogy] conclude that holiness has nothing to do with family origin.

*Kula parabata nahīṁ pūjiye, suta pratamā kī māṁni;
Tyūṁ rajaba rāṁmahī bhajyūṁ, gaī sakala kula kām̐ni. SAR 22.12, p. 135.*

Nobody thinks of the rocky hill when worshipping its offspring, the carved image [of the deity]; when one worships God (*rām*) all dishonour of family-origin is ignored.

In this verse from the chapter on nectar,¹⁴⁶ *ras kā aṅg*, the same message, namely that one should aspire to a state of blindness to caste, is echoed in a more direct and succinct form:

*Rajaba duniyā hada maiṁ, sādḥū jana behada;
Jāti pāṁti deṣai nahīṁ, pāyā hari rasa mada. SAR 60.21, p. 151.*

Worldly people are tied up whereas saints are totally free; drunken with the nectar of God (*hari*), the saint no longer cares for caste or class (247).

Sundardās (1596-1689~ CE) was Dādū's youngest disciple, being only eight at the time of Dādū's death. He wrote extensively and his work is highly regarded both for its poetic mastery and its depth. According to Orr, "no one did more to turn the thoughts of the [Dādū] Panth in the direction of Hindu philosophy than ... Sundar Das" (1947, 195). He does not

¹⁴⁵ Callewaert has instead "relations," and tenuously argues that "Iron is related to weapons and tools which perform dirty work. When it is changed to gold, it is used for jewels etc." (1978, 215n3).

¹⁴⁶ For *ras*, Callewaert reminds us that besides nectar, it also refers to "God, who is the source of the nectar of mystical experience" (1978, 246, a).

seem to concern himself as much with the issue of Hindus, Muslims and/or caste, but his attribute-less (*nirguṇī*) view of the divine as well as his writings on Vedānta clearly indicate that his views resemble those of Dādū on these issues.¹⁴⁷ A representative religious song (*pad*) from his *padāvalī* text, #82 (Callewaert and de Beeck 1991, 561; Sundardās and Miśra 1992, 2:1018) presents the familiar tropes we have seen with Dādū such as the water/drops analogy, and the disregard for the classification as Hindu or Muslim, and for caste (the translations that follow are mine):

*Aisā sataguru kījiye karanī kā pūrā;
Unamani dhyānaṃ tahāṃ dharai jahāṃ canda na sūrā. (tek)*

O guru! May [my] deeds be completed [such that]
[My] totally absorbed state of meditation be on the place where
there is no sun nor moon (refrain).

*Tana mana iṇdrī basi karai phiri ulaṭi samāvai;
Kanaka kāmīnī deṣikaiṃ kahūṃ citta na calāvai. 1.*

May my mind, body and senses reverse [themselves] and come to rest inwards;
On seeing wealth or attractive women, may they not make my mind wander.

*Dvai paṣa hindū turaka kī bici āpa saṃbhālai;
Gyāna ṣaḍaga gahi jhūjhatā madhi mārāga cālai. 2.*

May you take care of my mind, that between the two factions, Hindu and Muslim,
It walk the path amidst the fighting (*jhūjhatā*),¹⁴⁸ holding the aloft the sword
of wisdom.

*Jānai sabakaṃ ekahī pānī kī būṃdā;
Nīca ūṃca deṣai nahīṃ koī bābhāṇa sūdā. 3.*

May [my mind/deeds] know everyone to be drops of the same water;
May it not consider any brahman or śūdra as high or low.

*Saba saṃtani kā mata gahai sumirai karatārā;
Sundara aisai guru binā nahīṃ hvai nistārā. 4.*

Holding the tenets of all the sages, may [my mind/deeds] remember the Creator;
O Sundar! Without such a guru, there is no salvation.

¹⁴⁷ There is however a *pad* (201), that is unequivocally critical of Muslim practices such as *halāl* and meat consumption (Callewaert and de Beeck 1991, 1:582; Sundardās 1992, 2:1087-8); while it is criticizing a so-called *musalmān* vs. one who truly understands Mohammad's teaching, it could be perceived as bordering on intolerant.

¹⁴⁸ *jhūjha* = *yuddha*, battle, fight; *RHŠK* (1:474).

Sahajānand (“Unqualified Joy”), a short independent work by Sundardās comprising four *dohās*¹⁴⁹ and twenty *caupāis*,¹⁵⁰ speaks of the futility of religious observances, whether Hindu or Muslim, for gaining unqualified joy. The first six verses are of particular interest (Sundardās and Miśra 1992, 1:269-70):

Caupāi:

*Prathamahiṃ nirākāra nija bandam; guru prasāda sahajai ānandaṃ.
Pūraṇa brahma akala abināśi; pañca tatva kī sṛṣṭi prakāśi. 1.*

First, the formless, real, praised, unqualified joy [that is] the gift of the teacher,
The indivisible whole indestructible Brahman manifested the creation of the five
elements.

*Cinha binā saba koī āye; ihāṃ bhaye doī pantha calāye.
Hindū turaka uṭhyau yaha bharmā; hama doū kā chāḍyā dharmā. 2.*

Everyone arrived without any distinguishing marks, [but] upon arriving, we created
two paths.
The erroneous notion arose that one is Hindu or Muslim; I have given up both these
faiths.

*Nāṃ maiṃ kṛttama karma baṣānaṃ; nāṃ rasūla kā kalamā jānaṃ.
Nāṃ maiṃ tīna tāga gali nāūṃ; nāṃ maiṃ sunata kari baurāūṃ. 3.*

I don’t praise false acts, nor do I know the prophet’s profession of faith (*kalamā*).
I don’t wear the [Hindu] three-strand sacred thread, nor do I undergo circumcision
and go crazy(?).

*Mālā japaṃ na tasabī feraṃ; tīratha jāūṃ na makkā heraṃ.
Nhāi dhoi nahīṃ karūṃ acārā; ujū taiṃ puni hūvā nyārā. 4.*

I pray neither the Hindu nor Muslim rosaries, I don’t go on Hindu pilgrimage
nor to Mecca.
I don’t perform [Hindu] rites after bathing, moreover, I am free from [Muslim]
ritual ablutions.

*Ekādasī na bratahiṃ bicāraṃ; rojā dharaṃ na baṅga pukāraṃ.
Deva pitara nahīṃ pīra manāūṃ; dhartī gaḍaṃ na deha jalāūṃ. 5.*

¹⁴⁹ A *dohā* is “a rhyming couplet commonly used for aphorisms, as well as for longer narratives and didactic poetry. The first foot of each line has 13 morae and the second 11” (Greene et al. 2012, 689).

¹⁵⁰ *caupāi* = *caupāi*, a verse of four sections of fifteen or sixteen syllables (McGregor 1984, 22-3; Snell 1991, 21-2).

I don't observe the eleventh-day [Hindu] fast, nor the Ramazan fast,
nor make the call to prayer.
I don't observe the rites of Hindu gods, ancestors or Muslim saints, I neither cremate
nor bury the dead.

Dohā:
Hindū kī hadi chāḍi kai tajī turaka kī rāha;
Sundara sahajai cīnhiyāṃ ekai rāma alāha. 6.

I have left the limits of the Hindus, I have renounced the way of the Muslim.
Sundar has intuitively recognized that Ram and Allah are one and the same.

Sundardās not only shows his familiarity with both Hindu and Muslim culture, he advocates transcending the erroneous distinctions of Hindu and Muslim altogether to attain the unqualified joy that is innate to the realization of non-duality, of indivisible, whole Brahman (*pūrana* = *pūrṇa Brahman*).

The final selection from Sundardās, five *sākhīs*,¹⁵¹ distich verses, from his *Sākhī Grantha*, the Section on the Knower (*jñānī kā aṅga*), vv. 30.53-7 (Sundardās and Mísra 1992, 1:534), presents his stance regarding caste:

Aṃtyaja brāhmaṇa ādi dai dāra mathai jo koī;
Sundara bheda kachū nahīṃ pragaṭa hutāsana hoi. 53.

Whether an outcaste or a brahman churns two sticks [to start a fire],
O Sundar, there is no difference in the fire that is produced.

Dīpaga joyau bipra ghara puni joyau caṇḍāla;
Sundara doū sadan kau timira gayau tatkāla. 54.

If a lamp is lit in a brahman's house or in an outcaste's,
O Sundar, the darkness is immediately dispelled in both their houses.

Aṃtyaja kai jala kumbha maiṃ brāhmaṇa kalasa maṃjhāra;
Sundara sūra prakāśiyā duhumvāni maiṃ ikasāra. 55.

In the water within the earthen pot of an outcaste and in
the metal pitcher of a brahman,
The sun, O Sundar, is reflected identically in both.

Aṃtyaja brāhmaṇa ādi dai kiṃvā raṃka ki bhūpa;
Sundara darpana hātha lai so deṣai nija rūpa. 56.

¹⁵¹ See n. 117 on p. 45 for an explanation of *sākhī*.

Whether a brahman or an outcaste, a king or a pauper,
When one takes a mirror in hand, one sees one's own form.

*Sundara saba kauṃ jñāna kī bātaiṃ kahai aneka;
jyaum darpana bahu bhānti kai agni parai kauṃ eka. 57.*

Sundar tells everyone many words of wisdom:
Just as mirrors are of many types, but when they fall in the fire,
they become one.¹⁵²

Sundardās pointedly suggests that distinctions based on caste or other status are artificial and, when examined closely, indicative of no real difference; whether it is fire, light, the reflection of the sun in water, or the reflection of one's face in the mirror, they function the same for both an outcaste and a brahman, or for a pauper and a king. In fact, verse 54 on the sun's reflection in the water within a brahman or outcaste's vessel echoes sentiments raised in a Sanskrit poem, the *Manīṣā-pañcakam* "Five Verses of Wisdom,"¹⁵³ attributed to Śaṅkara in the eighth century, one of the earliest exponents of Advaita Vedānta. We shall look at this poem closely in the next chapter, when we explore Nīscaldās's position on caste vis-à-vis the Advaita tradition, in section 4.4.

The selections presented in this section clearly show us that Dādū's direct disciples, Rajjab and Sundardās, echoed Dādū's position on the matters of religion and caste, namely, that these are not important or relevant in light of the realization of non-duality, i.e., Brahman or Ram. The next section explores this in greater detail.

3.6 An Evaluation of the Views of Dādū, Rajjab and Sundardās on Religion and Caste

The verses quoted above are by no means comprehensive or complete, but these verses do represent the views of Dādū as well as his two most notable direct disciples regarding religion and caste. Dādū, Rajjab and Sundardās are consistent in their message regarding religion and caste. Some scholars have suggested that Dādū preached "Hindu-Muslim unity" (Chand 1963, 185; Sen 1936, 109), but this is an over-simplification. In the sampling provided above, we see that he and his followers are not suggesting unity, but rather the

¹⁵² Here Miśra explains that mirrors in the time of Sundardās were made of steel, *faulād* (Sundardās and Miśra 1992, 1:534).

¹⁵³ See p. 96.

transcendence of categories such as Hindu and Muslim, high caste and low. This is not at all surprising or novel. Kabir (1398-1448) presented the same radical message over a century and a half earlier, as did Nānak (1469-1539) half a century prior to Dādū, and Dādū was not unfamiliar with their message. In fact, the compositions of Kabir constitute one of the five books of the Dādū Panth's *Pañca Vāṇī*, Five Sacred Books.¹⁵⁴ In the *Dādū Vāṇī* too, Dādū himself invokes Kabir occasionally.¹⁵⁵ Regarding the influence of Kabir, Jules Bloch rather extravagantly remarked that “by boldly bringing the two religions [Hinduism and Islam] on the same plane, Kabir has contributed not only to purifying Hinduism by insisting that it was the most abstract and at the same time the most humane of religions, but has also furnished a justification for the presence of Islam on Indian soil.” But it is the following sentence that is of greater relevance to us: “It is on account of him [Kabir], his disciples, and other like-minded people that the two religions have managed to live side by side without harming each other. His attitude is not exceptional; we find it in Dharamdas, Raedas [*sic*], Mirabai, and Dadu, who came after him” (2003, 93).¹⁵⁶

The call to transcend categories is also logical, given Dādū's philosophical stance: to a *nirgunī sant*, a devotee of the unqualified, attribute-less God, any duality is evidence of rootedness in the unreal. An attachment to attributes and forms is tantamount to a forsaking of the divine. From a set theory perspective, the indivisible Brahman (*pūrṇa brahma*) is the universal set, and any categorization on the basis of religion or caste can only result in subsets, which, by their very nature as a part of the whole, are incomplete and unreal since they exclude other parts of the part-less Brahman.

But this insight regarding the insignificance of religious and caste distinctions obviously did not take hold among the Dādū Panth, as is indicated by the tradition's discomfort with Dādū's potential Muslim origins and its attempts to ignore or reinterpret them, and also by its Vaishnava self-identification in the present times. “A worthy successor of Kabir in terms of castelessness and protest against both Hindu and Muslim ritualism, Dādū in the end seems to have created only one more Hindu sect” (Zelliot 1976, 160). Section 4.6, on Nīscaldās's

¹⁵⁴ The other four *Vāṇīs* are those of Dādū, Nāmdev, Raidās and Hardās.

¹⁵⁵ For example, *DV* 7.9: *sira para rāṣi kabīra kauṃ, niraṃjana lyau lāi; dādū māraga juḡauṃ kā, eka palaka meṃ jāi*. Keeping [the teachings of] Kabir on one's head, i.e., in one's mind, bringing forth an attachment to God (*niraṃjana*), the path of eons [of rebirth] will pass in the blink of one's eye.

¹⁵⁶ Bloch essay (in French, English tr. by M. Waseem) also cites numerous verses of Kabir's, similar to those I have provided for Dādū, Rajjab and Sundardās, regarding religion and caste.

stance on religion and caste compared to that of the Dādū Panth, will revisit the question of whether or not Dādū's teachings had any influence on Niścaldās.

3.7 Comparisons Between the Hagiographies of Dādū and Niścaldās

In chapter 2, sections 2.2 through 2.6, the available biographical accounts of Niścaldās were evaluated to determine whether they conform to hagiographic styles. In the preceding sections (3.1 through 3.3), the biographies of Dādū Dayāl were similarly evaluated for presence or absence of standard hagiographic tropes. Using the list of common tropes provided by W. L. Smith (2000, iii), Table 1 compares the two hagiographies. ✓ indicates the presence of a trope, and ✕ its absence; ✓~ indicates its presence in a milder form, for example, Dādū's "widespread fame" not extending far beyond Rajasthan, and ✓≈ signifies that the trope may be considered only faintly present, as in the case of Niścaldās's "fame."

Hagiographic Trope	Dādū	Niścaldās
1. Descent	✓	✕
2. Childhood exploits, <i>bālya līlā</i>	✓	✓~
3. Marriage	✓	✓
4. Renouncing the world	✓	✓~
5. Appearance, personality, powers	✓	✓~
6. Visitation, <i>darśan</i>	✓	✕
7. Virtuous company, <i>satsaṅg</i>	✓	✓~
8. Widespread fame, <i>digvijaya</i>	✓~	✓≈
9. Meeting the emperor	✓	✓~
10. Enemies	✓	✓~
11. Brahman opposition	✓	✓~
12. Temptation, sin and salvation	✕	✓~
13. Hard <i>bhakti</i>	✓	✓~
14. Ascent to heaven, <i>svargārohaṇa</i>	✓	✕

Table 1: Comparison of the hagiographies of Dādū Dayāl and Niścaldās

While it is not required that all these tropes be present in a hagiography, Dādū Dayāl's biography by Jangopāl contains virtually all the hagiographic tropes. Dādū's fame (*digvijaya*) was mostly restricted to Rajasthan. It is not all that surprising that there are no accounts of Dādū ever having personally faced temptation or sin. By comparison, three of the common hagiographic tropes are absent in Niścaldās's biographical accounts (descent, *darśan*, and *svargārohaṇa*), and there is only one that can be undoubtedly considered present: that of marriage. All the remaining tropes occur in milder forms that some may not considered all that impressive; Niścaldās's fame (*digvijaya*) is even more limited than that of Dādū's. While

it is not required that a hagiography must have all these tropes, this comparison makes the point that accounts of Niścaldās's biography available to us, though not necessarily completely objective, are only mildly hagiographic, in the true sense of the term. As stated earlier in chapter 2, section 2.12, this can be attributed to two related factors: 1) Niścaldās's profound identification with non-dual Brahman did not, in all probability, invite the attention and adulation of potential followers and hagiographers in the manner in which an eloquent and charismatic devotee (*bhakta*) like Dādū Dayāl might have; 2) the admiration and respect that Niścaldās's biographers have for his scholarship and knowledge of Vedānta and his Brahman-realization might occasionally manifest itself in the presence of these hagiographic tropes, albeit in milder form.

Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote¹⁵⁷ that “[g]reat geniuses have the shortest biographies” (1906, 37); the hagiographers as though step up to redress the brevity. The purpose of hagiography is usually to 1) present notable events of the teacher's life as testimony to the doctrine he taught, 2) demonstrate the superiority of the teacher's teachings and/or sect, and 3) to present “selected, manipulated or invented” events of the teacher's life as illustrations of devotion in action and as a model for the faithful to emulate (Smith 2000, 16-18). Dādū in his time can be viewed as an instigator for change, advocating a direct relationship with the divine, independent of religion, teachers, scripture or caste. His message was at odds with the established orthodoxies, both Hindu and Islamic, and this likely caused his followers to look for means to propagate his message in order to reach a wider audience; hagiography was but one means to do so. In contrast, Niścaldās did not challenge orthodoxy to the same degree as Dādū; he made the uncompromising doctrine of Advaita Vedānta accessible in the vernacular, and while doing so, presented a cogent viewpoint that evaluated centuries of viewpoints about the doctrine, both for and against, and provided a clear statement of which thinkers were consistent with the doctrine and which were not. In other words, Niścaldās cut through the thicket of argument and counter-argument that had grown around Advaita Vedānta through centuries of tradition, both within Vedānta and in debates with other schools of Indian thought. Niścaldās presented the core of Advaita in such a way that one did not have to know Sanskrit and be immersed in the tradition to understand and assimilate. For this

¹⁵⁷ In the context of discussing Plato.

impressive feat, Nīścaldās was highly respected and sought after as a teacher; but his life and acts did not quite lend themselves to hagiographic purposes for the following reasons:¹⁵⁸ 1) Nīścaldās did not offer a new doctrine but instead presented interpretations already been offered by Śaṅkarācārya in the seventh century, and even earlier, by the scripture (*śruti*) itself; 2) the superiority of Advaita Vedānta had also been asserted by numerous Advaitins prior to Nīścaldās, who was merely clarifying their arguments, sorting through seemingly conflicting views and determining the most effective and relevant standpoints; and 3) while Nīścaldās is certainly reported to have lived a life that demonstrated his identity with Brahman, emulating such an identity, according to Vedānta, requires the seeker to engage in *śravaṇa*,¹⁵⁹ listening to canonical texts expounded by a teacher, *manana*, reflection on the content of these texts,¹⁶⁰ and *nididhyāsana*, profound and continuous meditation on the same.¹⁶¹ It would seem that a teacher such as Nīścaldās who presents the way of knowledge (*jñāna mārga*) is not as amenable a subject for hagiographers as teachers like Dādū Dayāl who present the way of devotion (*bhakti mārga*), even if such devotion leads to Brahman without attributes (*nirguṇa brahman*). Therefore, we have rich hagiographies of Dādū, but in the case of Nīścaldās, the biographers work milder versions of the typical tropes into their accounts, but do not produce a full hagiography.

Another interpretation for the absence of hagiographies of Nīścaldās is also possible.

Huston Smith, in the context of Christianity, has suggested that if no institution forms around

¹⁵⁸ Emerson goes on to write, explaining the paucity of biographical detail on Plato: “As a good chimney burns its smoke, so a philosopher converts the value of all his fortunes into his intellectual performances” (1906, 37). Nīścaldās, with his focus on Advaita Brahman, gave not just his biographers, but even his hagiographers little to work with!

¹⁵⁹ Śaṅkara considers *śravaṇa* as “listening, first from a teacher, and to scripture. *śrotavya pūrvam ācāryata āgamaś ca. BU 2.4.5 ŚBh*” (1986, 193). Sadānanda defines *śravaṇa* as “the ascertainment, by means of the six characteristics (see p. 124), that the goal of all of Vedānta is the non-dual essence [i.e., Brahman]. *śravaṇam nāma ṣaḍ-vidha-liṅgair aśeṣa-vedāntānām advitīya-vastuni tātparyāvadhāranam. Vedānta-sāra 182*” (1974, 104).

¹⁶⁰ Śaṅkara explains *manana* as “reflecting [on that which has been heard] by means of reasoning. *paścāt mantavyas tarkataḥ*” (1986, 193). Sadānanda defines *manana* as “the incessant reflection on the non-dual essence [i.e., Brahman] that has been heard [from the teacher], by means of proofs that are in accordance with Vedānta. *mananam tu śrutasyādvitīya-vastuno vedāntānugūṇa-yuktibhir anavaratam anucintanam. Vedānta-sāra 191*” (1974, 108).

¹⁶¹ For Śaṅkara, *nididhyāsana* means “subsequently [after *śravaṇa* and *manana*], meditation with resolve, *tato nididhyāsitavyo niścayena dhyātavya*” (1986, 193). But this does not convey the full sense of the word. *BU 2.4.5* uses *viñāna* instead of *nididhyāsana* when restating its case: “*ātmā vā are dṛṣṭavyaḥ śrotavyo mantavo nididhyāsitavyo maitreyy ātmano vā are darśanena śravaṇena matyā viñānena idaṃ sarvaṃ viditam.*” This suggests that knowing (*viñāna*) is also an aspect of *nididhyāsana*. Sureśvara in his *BU Vārtika*, states: “In restating what was already stated about ‘*darśana*, etc.,’ why is *nididhyāsana* referred to by *viñāna*? In order to forestall the doubt that *nididhyāsana* implies meditation. *amuvāde yathoktānām prakrānte darśanādiḥ; vijñānenety aha katham nididhyāsanam ucyate. dhyānāśaṅkā-nivṛtṭy-arthaṃ viñāneneti bhāṇyate*” (1982, 695 v. 232-33ab). Sureśvara also states that “*nididhyāsana* is knowing, dependent on [*śravaṇa* and *manana*], *aparāyatta-bodho 'tra nididhyāsanam ucyate*” (693 v. 217ab). According to Sadānanda, *nididhyāsana* is defined as “the stream of conceptions (*pratyaya-pravāha*) that are similar to the non-dual essence [i.e., Brahman], and are free from dissimilar conceptions such as the body, etc. *viñānīya-dehādi-pratyaya-rahitādvitīya-vastu-sajātīya-pratyaya-pravāho nididhyāsanam. Vedānta-sāra 192*” (1974, 108). See also Hino (1982, 22-5).

the message of religious teachers, their message of spirituality “gets no traction on history” (quoted in Horgan 2003, 19-20). In the case of Dādū Dayāl, there arose the Dādū Panth, which preserved his message through the systematization of his utterances in the *Dādū Vāṇī*, as well as through various hagiographies about him. The fact that no institution nor even small group of individuals arose around Nīscaldās for the purpose of preserving and propagating his message can be attributed to the fact that Nīscaldās, rather than being a potential founder of a new institution, can be considered a member not just of the Dādū Panth but also of the larger Advaita Vedānta community. This reverses the roles; instead of hagiographers propagating the glories of Nīscaldās's life and teachings, Nīscaldās himself is the author of works aimed at presenting the message of Advaita Vedānta, and, in the process, also of the Dādū Panth, to a larger audience by writing in the vernacular rather than in Sanskrit. Whereas a hagiography uses the tropes discussed above to draw attention to the teacher and his teachings, Nīscaldās draws upon his deep understanding of the Vedānta corpus to make its central message of non-duality accessible to common folk, through both logic as well as parable.

3.8 Nīscaldās within the Dādū Panth

One last issue concerning the Dādū Panth remains unexamined: the internal structure of the Panth and Nīscaldās's place within it. Caturvedī writes that by 1732 CE, five sub-factions had arisen within the Dādū Panth: Khālsā, Nāgā, Uttarārhī, Virakta, and Khākī (1964, 534).¹⁶² I shall briefly describe each of these groups: 1) *Khālsā*, pure: This term is applied to the members attached to the original *Dādū-dvāra* in Narainā, or to any of the branches (*thāmbā*) founded by Dādū's original disciples (Orr 1947, 217). They primarily engage in meditation (*dhyāna*), study (*adhyayana*), teaching (*adhyāpana*), and worship (*bhajana-ārādhana*); they are typically celibate, though a small number of these are householders (Caturvedī 1964, 534). 2) *Nāgā*:¹⁶³ The armed wing of the *panth* is probably the most studied

¹⁶² Caturvedī does not cite any source for this view.

¹⁶³ Historically, the word *nāgā* is held to derive from the term, *nagna*, “naked,” and used to describe the fighting ascetics, though this is not always agreed upon. The Dādūpanthī faction is clothed. See Orr (1940), Caturvedī (1964, 534) and Lorenzen (1978, 69). Edgerton, in the *BHSD*, provides “great man, mighty man, champion” as the meaning for *nagna*, and cites the description of *mahā-nagnā* in the Pali *Dīgha-Nikāya* i.51.10 “in a list of kinds of fighting men which include *ugga rājaputtā* [fierce princes]... *sūrā cammayodhino* [shield-bearing warriors] etc.” (289, 423 s.v.).

faction of the Dādūpanthīs, possibly because of the paradox presented by militant *sants*.¹⁶⁴ In the early-to-mid-eighteenth century, they worked as mercenaries and tax collectors. From 1797 onwards, five thousand or more Dādūpanthī Nāgās were in the service of Jaipur state, an arrangement that only came to an end in 1938. Their allegiance to the Jaipur state was so strong that during the 1857 uprising against the British, when the kingdom of Jaipur aligned itself with the British, the Nāgās “rendered good service in the Mutiny,” that is, to the British (Orr 1940, 95-96; 1947, 205-6). With the decline of the kingdom of Jaipur, the numbers of the Nāgās also subsequently declined, and today they are mostly householders (Thiel-Horstmann 1991, 255-6). 3) *Uttarāṛhī*, Northerners: This group consists mainly of the rich and respected (*dhanī-mānī*) members from Punjab, Haryana and Delhi. Many are involved in business, often as Ayurveda physicians or trade (*len-den*). They are often described as possessors of/dwellers in houses (*makān-vāle*), though it need not follow from this that they are married (Orr 1947, 218; Thiel-Horstmann 1997, 234). 4) *Virakta*, unattached:¹⁶⁵ Members of this group support themselves through alms (*bhikṣā*), and giving discourses at the homes of householders who invite them. They never stay more than a few days in one place and primarily engage themselves in the study of the *Dādū Vāṇī* and Sanskrit texts (Caturvedī 1964, 536). 5) *Khākī*, ash-smeared: These are considered a marginal group by the other groups; they remain apart from and observing rules different from those of the other Dādūpanthīs (Thiel-Horstmann 1997, 240-41; Orr 1947, 219).

Kapil (2005, 26) gives a slightly modified version of these sub-groups. Instead of five, she mentions six groups: ascetic (*tapasī*), instead of ash-smeared (*khākī*); the northern holders of a place or residence (*uttarādhā* [*sic*] *sthāndhārīs*), instead of the *uttarāṛhīs*, and as a sixth group, the *dakhanāṛhā sthāndhārīs*, analogous to the *uttarāṛhīs*, but located in the south of Rajasthan.

Among these five factions, Nīscaldās is held to belong to the *Uttarāṛhī* group, based on his original residence in Haryana. He is also considered to have practiced Ayurveda medicine, and Raṇjīt Siṃha reports inspecting old letters and account ledgers (*bahī-khāta*)

¹⁶⁴ See, for examples, Thiel-Horstmann (1991), Gold (1994), Orr (1940), Mīśra (1997).

¹⁶⁵ Orr (1947, 218) calls them ‘devotees’ while Thiel-Horstmann (1997, 234) calls them ‘monks,’ though neither term reflects the innate sense of *virakta*.

attesting to Nīscaldās's engagement in trade (*len-den*) (1981, 15).¹⁶⁶ However, this detail of Nīscaldās's Uttarārhī affiliation appears to be a mere afterthought. In almost all accounts, it is not even mentioned, and the three that do mention it do so towards the end, as they are concluding the relevant section. Raṅjīt Siṃha refers to it towards the end of the chapter on Nīscaldās's life, and after enumerating and briefly describing the five sub-groups of the Dādū Panth (1981, 15). Caturvedī, followed by Siṃha, does not mention the Uttarārhī affiliation at all in the section on Nīscaldās (1964, 514-16), which is itself included in another section titled "Other disciples and grand-disciples (*pra-śiṣya*) of Dādū." We only learn of Nīscaldās's Uttarārhī affiliation when Caturvedī is describing the sub-groups of the Dādū Panth and listing notable members of the group (536). Kapil mentions Nīscaldās's Uttarārhī affiliation in a similar context and manner as Siṃha (2005, 26). She is certainly aware of both Siṃha and Caturvedī's writings on Nīscaldās, but she cites the sub-group details from the work *Śrī Dādū Caritra – Citravalī* by Sukhdayāl Dādū, which I have been unable to locate to verify its sources. In the sectarian accounts by Swāmī Nārāyaṇdās, Nīscaldās's Uttarārhī connection is mentioned to indicate his geographical location (1978-9, 839, 1026-28). In the account of Nīscaldās by Sūratrām Dādū (1994) (Sukhdayāl Dādū's younger brother), there is no mention of the Uttarārhī affiliation. These accounts suggest that Nīscaldās's group affiliation was considered an incidental detail, not highly significant in the overall picture of his life.

However, none of these authors doubt Nīscaldās's affiliation with the Dādū Panth itself,¹⁶⁷ although, as we shall see shortly, others have even questioned the strength of this affiliation. As evidence for Nīscaldās's being a Dādūpanthī, Siṃha points out that Nīscaldās himself proclaims his affiliation in the concluding verse(s)¹⁶⁸ of each of the seven sections (*taraṅga*), in his *VS*. These verses are also enumerated by the hagiographers and biographers

¹⁶⁶ There is some ambiguity in the sense of the term *len-den*, literally 'giving and taking.' While it typically means 'trade' or 'business,' it can also mean 'dealings.' Thus it is not clear if Siṃha means to say that Nīscaldās engaged in trade, or he had dealings that extended as far as Bhivānī. He writes, "*Nīscaldās ne apne jīvankāl meṃ bahut len-den kiya. yaham tak ki inkā len-den hariyāna kī prasiddha vyāpārik [sic] nagarī bhivānī tak phailā huā thā. is bāt kī puṣṭi lekhak ne kihadhaulī jākar prācīn patra aur bahī khāta dekhakar kī hai.*" Nīscaldās did much *len-den* in his lifetime, to the extent that his *len-den* was spread as far as Bhivānī, the famous business city of Haryana. This matter was verified by the author himself by going to Kihadhaulī and inspecting old letters and account ledgers" (15). But the author is silent on the nature of Nīscaldās's *len-den*.

¹⁶⁷ To quote Raṅjīt Siṃha, "*Nīscaldās dādūpanth ke anuyāyī the, is viṣay meṃ raṃca-mātra bhī saṃdeh nahīm hai.*" Regarding the matter that Nīscaldās was a follower of the Dādū Panth, there is not even the slightest doubt (14).

¹⁶⁸ The last *taraṅga* has two verses that invoke Dādū.

as justification for Niścaldās's commitment to the Dādū Panth. I present the *dohās* from *VS* here, with my translations:¹⁶⁹

*Jo jana prathama-taraṅga yaha, paṛhai tāhi tatkāla;
Karahu mukta gurumūrti hvai, dādū dīnadayāla (VS v. 1.29).*

Those who would read this first chapter, liberate them immediately,
O Dādū the compassionate, [who] is the embodiment of [my] teacher.

*Dādū dīna dayāla jū, sata sukha paramaprakāśa;¹⁷⁰
Jāmaiṃ mati kī gati nahīṃ, soī niścaldāsa (VS v. 2.15).*

Dādū, the compassionate, who is being, happiness and the highest light;
Whose mind is unmoving, is not at all different from Niścaldās.¹⁷¹

*Tana mana dhana bānī arapi, jīhiṃ sevata cita lāya;
Sakalarūpa so āpa hai, dādū sadā sahāya (VS v. 3.23).*

Dādū is the self in entirety, [he is] always [of] help
Who served attentively,¹⁷² offering one's body, mind, wealth and speech.

*'Ahaṃ brahma' yā vṛttimaiṃ, nirāvarana hvai bhāna;
Dādū ādūrūpa so, yūṃ hama liyo pichāna (VS v. 4.120).*

In the *vṛtti*, "I am Brahman," the concealment is removed;
I have recognized Dādū as that primeval form.

*Omkāraako artha lakhi, bhayo kṛtārtha adṛṣṭi;
Paṛhai ju yāhi taraṅga tihī, dādū karahu sudṛṣṭi (VS v. 5.170)*

Understanding the meaning of Om, Adṛṣṭi¹⁷³ achieved his goal;
May Dādū clear the vision of the one who reads just this chapter.

*Bandha-harana sukha-karana śrī, dādū dīnadayāla;
Paṛhai sunai jo grantha yaha, tāke harahu jañjāla (VS v. 6.2.5).¹⁷⁴*

¹⁶⁹ All citations from *VS* are from the Khemrāj Śrīkrṣṇadās edition, Niścaldās (1917). I have verified that none of these *dohās* are quotations or even partial quotations from *DV*.

¹⁷⁰ The attributes *sata*, *paramaprakāśa*, *sukha* are synonyms for *sat*, *cit*, *ānanda* – existence, consciousness, and joy. This compound, *saccidānanda* is the very nature of Brahman in Advaita Vedānta. This verse also contains a clever pun on Niścaldās's name: *niścala* = unmoving.

¹⁷¹ Nārāyaṇdās gives an alternate, literal interpretation for this second half by providing the following context for the verse: A dim-witted but faithful seeker asked Niścaldās why his form was different from that of Dādū as opposed to what is stated in *VS* v. 2.15. Niścaldās asked the seeker to look at him with a one-pointed, concentrated mind and when the seeker did so he saw Niścaldās as Dādū. (Nārāyaṇdās 1978-9, 2:844).

¹⁷² *cita lāya/lāi*, (Thiel-Horstmann 1983, 164, s.v.)

¹⁷³ Name of the second prince in the *VS* frame story, who represents a *madhyamādhikārī*, middling aspirants. See n. 580 on p. 315.

Dādū Dayāl, the compassionate, is the remover of bondage, causing happiness,
auspicious;
Whoever reads or hears this text, free him from this snare of birth and death.

*Lacchya artha lakhi vākyako, hvai jijñāsu nihāla;
Nirāvarana so āpa hai, dādū dīnadayāla (VS v. 6.2.60).*¹⁷⁵

Understanding the deeper sense of the sentence, the seeker becomes happy;
The unconcealed is the self, [which is] Dādū, the compassionate.

*Jñānī mukti videha maiṃ, jāsaṃ hoyā abheda;
Dādū ādūrūpa so, jāhi bakhānata veda (VS v. 7.116).*

The knower [reaches] liberation after death, and therefore becomes non-different
[from Brahman];
Dādū is that primeval form which alone expounds the Vedas.

*Nāma-rūpa vyabhicāri maiṃ, anugata eka anūpa;
Dādūpada ko lacchya hai, asti-bhāti-priya-rūpa (VS v. 7.117)*

Name and form are used fallaciously, they follow the incomparable One.
The deeper meaning of the term Dādū is [that which has] the nature of being,
manifestation and dearness (i.e., Brahman).¹⁷⁶

These verses comprise all of Niścaldās's references to Dādū in *VS*, and the term *Dādū* has a double meaning throughout, as both the founder of the Dādū Panth, and as Brahman.¹⁷⁷

But there is no mention of Dādū in the beginning of the text in the *mangalācaraṇa* verse, the invocation of a blessing, where an author traditionally invokes one's guru. At least one writer, Kuppuswamy Raju, in his introduction to his Tamil translation of *Vṛttiprabhākar* (Niścaldās 1901), felt that since Niścaldās did not explicitly present Dādū Dayāl's teachings, his conviction in them must have been weak. Yet Kuppuswamy acknowledges

¹⁷⁴ In *VS* 6, the verses pertaining to the story of Agrdhadeva's dream restart the numbering from 1 onwards. To avoid confusion with earlier verses (1-12) in the same chapter, the new verses are indicated as *VS* v. 6.2.nn.

¹⁷⁵ See n. 174 for verse numbering convention.

¹⁷⁶ This is a reference to *Dr̥g-dr̥śya-viveka* 20 by Vidyāranya/Bhāratīrtha: *asti bhāti priyaṃ rūpaṃ nāma cetyaṃśapañcakam; ādyatrayam brahmarūpaṃ jagadrūpaṃ tato dvayam*. "Being, manifestation, dearness, form and name are five [attributes]. The first three are the nature of Brahman, the remaining two are the nature of creation." Thus one who is termed as having the *rūpa* of *asti-bhāti-priya* is essentially being called *brahma-rūpa*, i.e., Brahman.

¹⁷⁷ In my translations of these *VS* verses, I have stayed with the literal meaning of Dādū, i.e. as referring to the founder of the Dādū Panth.

Nīscaladās as a strong *brahma-niṣṭha*, one who is steadfast in Brahman.¹⁷⁸ Moreover, in the *VP*¹⁷⁹ and *YP*, there is no mention of Dādū anywhere at all. This understandably raises the question of the strength of Nīscaldās's commitment to the Dādū Panth. An explanation for the absence of references to the founder of his lineage in Nīscaldās's other works can be found in the opening invocatory verses (*maṅgala dohā*) of *VS*:

Jo sukha nitya prakāsa vibhu, nāma rūpa ādhāra;
Mati na lakhai jihim mati lakhai, so maiṁ śuddha apāra (*VS* v. 1.1).

That which is joy, eternal, manifest, all-pervasive, the basis for name and form;
Which the intellect does not understand [but] which understands the intellect –
I am that pure, boundless [Brahman].

Abdhi apāra svarūpa mama, laharī viṣṇu mahesa;
Vidhi ravi caṁdā varuna yama, sakti dhanesa ganesa (*VS* v. 1.2).

My nature is [like a] boundless ocean [whose] waves are Viṣṇu, Śiva,
Brahmā (*vidhi*), the sun, moon, Varuna, Yama, [the goddess] Śakti, Kubera (*dhanesa*)
and Ganeśa.

Jā kṛpālu sarvajñako, hiya dhārata muni dhyāna;
Tāko hota upādhitaiṁ, momaiṁ mithyā bhāna (*VS* v. 1.3).

The compassionate knower of all, whom sages hold in the heart in contemplation,
Appears in 'me' falsely through [its] *upādhi* (limiting adjunct)¹⁸⁰ [which is *māyā*].

Hvai jihim jānai bina jagata, manahum jevarī sāṁpa;
Nasai bhujaga jaga jihim lahai, so 'haṁ āpai āpa (*VS* v. 1.4).

Without knowing [Brahman], the world appears like a snake [perceived] on a rope;
Just as the snake disappears for one who sees [the rope], so does
the creation [for a knowledge of Brahman]; I myself am [that Brahman].

Bodha cāhi jākoṁ sukṛti, bhajata rāma niṣkāma;
So mero hai ātamā, kākūṁ karūṁ pranāma (*VS* v. 1.5).

People do good acts and selflessly worship God (*rām*) in order to know that
Which is my self, [so] to whom should I prayerfully bow down?

¹⁷⁸ Nīscaldās (1901, 4-7). My thanks to Ms. Hamsavāṇī Kuppuswamy (no relation) and Mr. Maṇikaṇḍan for translating the Tamil for me in Rishikesh, July 2006.

¹⁷⁹ *VP* has only three *dohās*. (Nīscaldās 1899, 1, 275, 361).

¹⁸⁰ This is the usual, yet unsatisfactory, translation for *upādhi*. See p. 171 for a discussion of its sense.

Niścaldās clearly indicates that he is beyond identification with name and form (*nāma-rūpa*) and sees Brahman as the ground of his own self, the boundless Brahman that encompasses all including the various deities. Brahman is the basis of all creation and is only perceived by name and form due to the *upādhi* (“limiting adjunct”)¹⁸¹ that is caused by *māyā*, the veiling aspect of Īśvara. In just these five verses at the very beginning of the text, Niścaldās very directly and uncompromisingly presents the core tenets of Advaita Vedānta and shifts the reader’s frame of reference from the conventional reality (*vyāvahārika sattā*), to the absolute or highest reality (*pāramārthika sattā*). From the standpoint of absolute reality, there is no deity or guru, there is nothing but the self, so whom should he invoke?¹⁸² He seems to imply that it is irrelevant whether Dādū or any other guru or deity is supplicated once one has clearly seen that one’s self is none other than Brahman.

This is affirmed by Pt. Pītāmbār’s commentary (*ṭīkā*) to these verses. Introducing *VS* v. 1.5, the *ṭīkā* implies the doubt, that Niścaldās ought to invoke at least Ram in his invocatory verses (*maṅgala*), as Ram signifies attribute-less (*nirguṇa*) Brahman in the Dādū Panth. But it is explained that since Ram is indeed the nature of his (Niścaldās’s) *ātmā*, and nothing other than him exists, it is not possible to supplicate anyone else (Niścaldās 1994, 6-7; 1967, 8-9). Indirectly, through these *maṅgala* verses, Niścaldās is also establishing his eligibility (*adhikāra*) for writing this text (*VS*) which will make this very insight accessible to the reader.

There is no reason to doubt Niścaldās’s place in the Dādū Panth, since all the accounts, sectarian and non-sectarian, mention Niścaldās as belonging to this Panth, and he has not been affiliated with any other Panth. Niścaldās’s scholarship is highly esteemed by the Dādūpanthīs, even though they are not really familiar with the content of his works.¹⁸³ Sūratrām Dādū explains the difference between Niścaldās and Dādū thus: “Niścaldās’s path was that of knowledge, not devotion. ... Niścaldās’s highest teacher (*parama-guru*), Dādū Dayāl used to consider all three – devotion, knowledge and detachment – as means for

¹⁸¹ See n. 180.

¹⁸² This may appear an unseemly grandiose and unbowing perspective, but it has sound precedent. See, for example, Śaṅkara in his *bhāṣya* on *BhG* 12.13, where he states that “Nobody who comes to know Īśvara as the Self through proper means, desires to subordinate (*guṇabhāvaṃ jigamiṣati*) himself to anybody else, because it would be contradictory. *Na ca ātmānam īśvaram pramāṇataḥ buddhvā kasyacid guṇabhāvaṃ jigamiṣati kaścid, virodhāt.*” This has even greater significance when one considers that it occurs in what is considered the *BhG* chapter on *bhakti-yoga*, the way of worship.

¹⁸³ To Thiel-Horstmann, Niścaldās is “a highly thought of but hardly read Dādūpanthī Vedāntist” (1989, 146). She means hardly read by the Dādūpanthīs themselves, and this was borne out by my conversations with them in the field.

attaining the highest joy. ... Niścaldās had meditated on Dādū as his teacher in the beginning. ... Dādū advanced Niścaldās on the path of knowledge and Niścaldās thoroughly mastered that path and experienced that ‘The implied meaning (*lacchya=lakṣya*) of the term Dādū is Brahman (*VS* v. 7.117)’” (Dādū 1994, 56-7).¹⁸⁴ All that matters to the Dādū Panth, it seems, is that one of their own order has written works that are highly regarded far beyond their domain, and this, they feel only adds to the glory of the Panth.

3.9 Chapter Summary

This section attempted to clarify the relationship of Niścaldās to the Dādū Panth. First, both historical and hagiographical accounts about the founder of the Panth, Dādū Dayāl, were examined. The evidence is inconclusive as to Dādū’s lower caste and Muslim origins as well as his possibly Muslim teacher(s), but there seems to be a discomfort with these matters from the time of his direct disciples onward, and there is evidence of attempts to either downplay such uncomfortable references or to “brahmanize” outright Dādū and his *panth*. The Dādū Panth reads much into Dādū’s meeting with Akbar, though there is no historical record on the Mughal side corroborating the event. It is likely that the meeting did occur, but its impression, as Orr suggests, might have been greatest on his hagiographer, Jangopāl. On analysis, all but one of the fourteen hagiographic tropes enumerated by W. L. Smith are found to be present in Jangopāl’s *DJL*, with an unsurprising exception: the loyal hagiographer recorded no instance of Dādū ever facing temptation, sinning, or requiring salvation.

An investigation of Dādū’s writings as recorded in the *Dādū Vāñī* showed his familiarity with Muslim and Sufi ideas, and his usage of relevant Arabic and Persian terms and conventions. Rather than the Muslim being demonized as “the Other,” his writings suggest that whether one is called Muslim or Hindu is unimportant; what matters is that one cultivate the non-denominational and universal attributes such as compassion, kindness, non-violence, etc. Dādū’s writings suggest that categorization on the basis of one’s religion is contrived and irrelevant from the standpoint of his vision of uncompromising non-duality. Scriptures and leaders of any religious tradition are empty of knowledge of the non-dual ground of all being

¹⁸⁴ *Svāmī niścaldās jī kā jñān mārg thā, bhakti mārg nahīm thā. ... Niścaldās jī ke param-guru śrī dādū dayāl jī bhakti, jyān, aur vairāgya (niṣkāṁ karma) tīnoṁ mārgoṁ ko paramānand prāpti ke sādhan mānte the. ... Niścaldāsne dādū jī kī guru rūp meṁ hī ārambh se upāsana kī thī. ... Dādū jī ne niścaldās jī ko jñān mārg par āge baḍhāyā aur niścaldās jī jyān mārg meṁ pāramgat ho gaye, aur unhoṁne aṁt me yah anubhav kiya ‘Dādū pada ko lakṣya hai, asti-bhāti-priya-rūpa.’*

(Brahman) which is without attributes (*nirguṇa*) and is beyond words. He considers caste (*jāti*), too, to be an erroneous notion. It is not birth and family lineage that matters, but what is within oneself. The true measure of a human being is revealed by how one acts. On the matters of religion and caste, selections from two of his immediate disciples, Rajjab, a Muslim, and Sundardās, a Hindu, showed that they too had views similar to those of Dādū. The writings of all three teach transcendence of categories such as religion and caste. This will provide the context from which Nīscaldās's views on similar matters can be investigated in the next chapter, and we shall examine (in section 4.6) whether any direct influence can be detected on his choice to write in the vernacular.

On comparing the hagiographies of Dādū and Nīscaldās (Table 1, p. 63), we saw that in Nīscaldās's biographical accounts three of the common hagiographic tropes (of descent, visitation (*darśan*), and ascent to heaven) are absent. There is only one trope that can be undoubtedly considered present: that of marriage. All the remaining tropes occur in milder forms as compared to Dādū's hagiography. This can be considered a direct result of Nīscaldās's profound identification with non-dual Brahman which would not prove as attractive to potential hagiographers as Dādū's charismatic devotion (*bhakti*). The respect that Nīscaldās's biographers have for his scholarship and knowledge of Vedānta and his Brahman-realization may explain the milder form of the hagiographic tropes that are present. Nīscaldās's uncompromising vision and embodiment of non-duality did not challenge orthodoxy to the same extent as Dādū's message to cultivate a direct relationship with the divine. Nīscaldās's teachings did not gain any "traction on history" within the Dādū Panth; his teaching lineage did not even survive three generations. Conversely, Nīscaldās's writings themselves serve the function of hagiographies and help propagate the message of Advaita Vedānta to the broader Advaita Vedānta community, making its central message of non-duality accessible to common folk who have no knowledge of Sanskrit.

Finally, the sub-groups within the Dādū Panth and Nīscaldās's place among these were discussed, and Nīscaldās's relationship to the Dādū Panth as a whole was also examined. The mention of Nīscaldās's affiliation to the Northern sub-group, the Uttarārḥīs, appears to be a mere afterthought, suggesting that this be considered an incidental detail, not highly significant in the overall picture of his life. But his affiliation to the Dādū Panth as a whole was important to consider, as some have questioned the strength of his commitment to the

group, given that he does not mention Dādū in the beginning of his texts in the invocatory verses (*mangalācaraṇa*) where one typically invokes one's guru. Even though the concluding verse(s) of each of the seven sections of his *VS* contain the word "Dādū," the term has a double meaning throughout, signifying both the founder of the Dādū Panth, and as Brahman. In his *VP* and *YP*, there is no mention of Dādū whatsoever. This is explained by Nīscaldās himself via his opening invocatory verses (*maṅgala dohā*) to the *VS*, where he openly states that he is beyond identification with name and form (*nāma-rūpa*) and sees Brahman as the ground of his own self, the boundless Brahman that encompasses all including the various deities. Given this, to whom should he prayerfully bow down? From the standpoint of absolute reality, there is no deity or guru, there is nothing but the self, so whom should he invoke? To Nīscaldās, it is irrelevant whether Dādū or any other guru or deity is supplicated once one has clearly seen that one's self is none other than Brahman.

4 Niścaldās and the Vernacular

As defined by Sheldon Pollock, vernacularization is “the historical process of choosing to create a written literature, along with its complement, a political discourse, in local languages, according to models supplied by a superordinate, usually cosmopolitan, literary culture” (2006, 23).¹⁸⁵ Such a process signals “the protohistory of the nation” and we are witnessing a decision by the authors “to make texts in languages that did not travel—and that they knew did not travel—as far as Sanskrit...” Pollock suggests that to make such a decision “to produce a regional alternative to [Sanskrit] and to elect to remain within a limited world was ... to effect a break ... in cultural communications and self-understanding.” In choosing the language in which a text will be produced, a choice is also being made regarding cultural identity formation, which has potential political significance, particularly if the text is commissioned by a royal court (1998, 43-6). This chapter explores whether the concept of vernacularization applies to Niścaldās. It also takes a closer look at Niścaldās’s position on caste, particularly as viewed in the light of his decision to write in the vernacular instead of in Sanskrit. Niścaldās’s stance is compared with that of the Advaitin Śaṅkara, and also of the *Mahābhārata*, to determine if Niścaldās is making a break with tradition and society, and whether his motives are political. The attitude of Dādū and his disciples Rajjab and Sundardās towards religion and caste is also revisited in order to evaluate whether, and to what degree, Niścaldās concurs with them (in section 4.6).

4.1 Why Did Niścaldās Write in the Vernacular?

Niścaldās’s motive for writing in the vernacular is glimpsed in the opening verses of *VS*, where he states:

*sutra bhāṣya vārtika prabhṛti, grantha bahuta surabāni;
tathāpi maiṃ bhāṣā karūṃ, lakṣi mati-manda ajāni. (VS v. 1.7)*

There are many Sanskrit texts [such as the *Brahma-*]sūtra, [Śaṅkara’s]
commentaries, [Sureśvara’s] *Vārtika*,¹⁸⁶ etc.,
Yet I write in the vernacular, taking into account the average person who is ignorant
[of Sanskrit].

¹⁸⁵ The cosmopolitan language, for Pollock’s arguments, is Sanskrit. At other locales and periods of India’s history, Persian is another contender for status as “cosmopolitan.”

¹⁸⁶ According to Pt. Pītāmbār’s gloss, a *vārtika* (var. *vārtika*) is a secondary, supplementary metrical commentary which explains stated, unstated and opposing opinions regarding the core text (Niścaldās 1917b, 2n7).

*kavijanakṛta bhāṣā bahuta, grantha jagata vikhyāta;
bina vicārasāgara lakhai, nahiṃ sandeha nasāta. (VS v. 1.8)*

Although there are many famous vernacular texts written by wise persons,
Without reading *Vicārsāgar*, doubts will not be destroyed.

This verse attests to Nīścaldās's awareness of the unsuitability of Sanskrit for dispelling doubts many might have regarding Vedānta. The (unattributed) introduction to the printed edition of *VP* published by Khemrāj Śrīkrṣṇadās states that *VS* was aimed at average folk (*manda-buddhivāle*) in simple language (Nīścaldās 1899, np). According to Swāmī Vivekananda, “[this] book has more influence in India than any that has been written in any language within the last three centuries” (335). This is hardly the “limited world” to which Pollock is alluding in the quote above. *VS* has been translated into modern Hindi, Sanskrit, Bengali, Marathi, Gujarati, Tamil, Telugu and English,¹⁸⁷ and has been the subject of many commentaries,¹⁸⁸ all of which attest to its widespread appeal. *VS* describes three kinds of truth-seekers and the nature of *mokṣa*, liberation. It is written in simple language to avoid burdening the reader with technical Sanskrit vocabulary, without advocating any specific sectarian way (not even Dādūpanthī), or engaging in any argumentation and excessive refutation of other viewpoints.

In his auto-commentary to *VS* v. 1.8, Nīścaldās elaborates on the “other famous vernacular texts” of the time. There are the *pañca-bhāṣā*, the five vernacular texts written, according to Pt. Pītāmbār, by Manohardās. These are titled *Ṣaṭ-praśnī* (Six Questions), *Śata-praśnī* (Hundred Questions), *Jñāna-mañjarī* (Knowledge-blossoms), *Jñāna-cūrṇa* (Knowledge Simplified) and *Vedānta-sāra* (The Essence of Vedānta). Nīścaldās considers all these incorrect in some portions, and hence they are incapable of providing the reader with a doubt-free understanding. The vernacular *Ātma-bodha* (self-knowledge) by Māṇakdās is also considered to be incapable of producing understanding, since it is incomplete in Vedānta methodology.¹⁸⁹ Only *VS* contains the entire methodology and conforms fully to

¹⁸⁷ There may be other language versions, e.g., Nārāyaṇdās (1978-9, 2:852), also mentions Urdu and Gurmukhi versions.

¹⁸⁸ Dādū (1994) and Nīścaldās (1967) are two such examples.

¹⁸⁹ Sadly these texts, or others by these authors, are not to be found.

Vedānta, without any contradictions. Hence, Nīścaldās proclaims his text superior to these other vernacular texts (3).¹⁹⁰

The introduction to *VS* states that because it was targeted toward an elementary audience, the general populace, Rājā Rāmsiṃha of Būndī requested Nīścaldās to write something for more erudite readers (Pītāmbār 1917, 7). As *VS* only briefly explained the *pramāṇas*, means of knowledge, there might be many doubts remaining in the minds of the readers. Thus *VP*, a much more complex text, was created in order to fully dispel any doubts, and explain the *pramāṇas* as well as the various kinds of perceptual errors (*khyātī*). This work is highly regarded, as one of the introductory verses¹⁹¹ proclaims:

*sūradāsa tulsīdāsa keśavdāsa ādi bhale, chandanake racabe meṃ bhaye
kavibhūpahi;
yāhike samāna bhāṣā granthana meṃ artha nāhiṃ, jāsuke mananakare miṭai
bhavakūpahī. (VP intro. v. 1)*

Let Sūrdās, Tulsīdās, Keshavdās and others be poet-kings in composing poetry.
There is no purpose in [their vernacular] language books comparable to what is found
here, contemplating which, the pit of existence is destroyed.

For each *pramāṇa* (means of knowledge), first the Nyāya standpoint is presented, then differences between *prācīna* and *navya* Nyāya, if any, are taken up. Differences from the Mīmāṃsaka viewpoints are also considered, and then finally the refutation of, or agreement with these viewpoints from the perspective of Advaita Vedānta is presented. Without an intimate familiarity with these other views and their specialized terminology, it is often a challenge to follow the argument. The language here is geared towards learned readers as compared to the *VS* and *YP*, which, as already noted, were written for average, unlearned folk. Nīścaldās's erudition is clearly showcased in the *VP*, in the scope of literature with which he exhibits intimate familiarity: Grammar (*vyākaraṇa*), Nyāya (*prācīna* and *navya*), Mīmāṃsā (Bhāṭṭa and Prābhākara), as well as all the Advaita secondary literature.¹⁹² Nīścaldās compares the standpoints presented by various sub-schools of Advaita, without any particular preference for one over the rest, though he deems certain standpoints in Vācaspati

¹⁹⁰ It is both sad and ironic that none of these "famous vernacular texts" referred to by Nīścaldās are available today in print, not even in the WorldCat library catalog which claims to be "the world's largest network of library-based content and services." They may survive in manuscript collections; I have not explored this avenue.

¹⁹¹ In *kavitta* meter, most likely not by Nīścaldās.

¹⁹² By my analysis, in addition to *śruti* and *smṛti* texts, Nīścaldās refers to over fifty texts and forty authors by name connected with Vyākaraṇa, Nyāya, Advaita and other fields. See Appendix 1: Works and Authors Cited in *VP*, p. 407ff.

Miśra's *Bhāmatī* (ninth century), Sarvajñātman's *Samkṣepa-śārīraka* (eleventh century), Vidyāranya's *Pañcadaśī* (fourteenth century), Ānandabodha's *Nyāya-makaranda* (eleventh/twelfth century) inconsistent with core Advaita positions. According to Pandit Pītāmbar, several Sanskrit-knowing pandits read *VP* in hiding, because they were embarrassed to have to seek help from a *bhāṣā* or vernacular text (Pītāmbar 1917, 7).

Certainly, one reason for the influence of Nīscaldās's works is his decision to make them accessible to "average folk" in *bhāṣā*, the vernacular.¹⁹³ At the conclusion of *VS*, we have:

*tina yaha bhāṣāgrantha kiya, raṁca na upajī lāja;
tāmaiṁ yaha ika hetu hai, dayādharmā sirtāja. (VS v. 7.113)*

From them,¹⁹⁴ I've written this work in the vernacular, without embarrassment. Compassion and *dharma* are its crown. In writing this, I have only this one goal:

*bina vyākaraṇa na paḍhi sakai, grantha saṁskṛta manda;
paṛhai yāhi anayāsa hīṁ, lahai su paramānanda (VS v. 7.114)*

Without knowledge of grammar, Sanskrit works cannot be read by the average folk. They can read this (*VS*) with ease, and attain the highest bliss.

Some insight may be gained into why Nīscaldās chose to compose his works in the vernacular by recalling the account of his earlier years (chapter. 2). By the age of fourteen, he had already experienced caste discrimination at the hands of the pandits – because he was a Jāt kṣatriya, they refused to teach him Sanskrit. Thus, when he arrived in Benares in 1806-07 (Siṁha 1981, 5; Kapil 2005, 24), he lied and passed himself off as a brahman (Caturvedī 1964, 514-15). According to hagiographic accounts, this act of lying would have profound consequences for him. As recounted in chapter 2, when Nīscaldās confessed his lie and revealed his true caste, his teacher is said to have cursed him, saying that he would from then on be regularly troubled by fever, and that his lineage would not prosper. It would be quite reasonable to assume that Nīscaldās's experience of discrimination may also have motivated him to make his works accessible to a wider audience who do not know Sanskrit and should not be required to resort to deceitful means to gain such knowledge. This will be explored in greater depth shortly in section 4.2 below.

¹⁹³ Siṁha (1981, 89) notes the presence of words from the local Bāṅgrū/Haryānvī dialect.

¹⁹⁴ The works he has studied. See *VS* vv. 7.111-12 quoted on p. 15 **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

In *VS* 3.99, 59, Nīscaldās notes that, if ailments can be cured by means of knowledge gained from Ayurveda texts written in Hindi or Farsi, one can also arrive at knowledge of the identity of *ātmā* and *paramātmā* through Vedānta texts written in Hindi. He writes:

*brahmarūpa ahi brahmavita,*¹⁹⁵ *tākī vānī veda;*
bhāṣā athavā saṃskṛta, karata bheda bhrama cheda (*VS* v. 3.10).

A knower of Brahman is Brahman incarnate, and his speech is the Veda.
Whether in the vernacular or in Sanskrit, it destroys the error of duality.

To Nīscaldās, what really matters is that the teachings help to deliver the knowledge of Brahman to a seeker (*mumukṣu*) and that they remove all doubts and confusion, regardless of the language in which the teachings are given. One can get a sense of how radical this notion was for his era from an argument presented by the seventeenth century grammarian, Kaunḍa Bhaṭṭa. Traditionally, it was held that only grammatical Sanskrit had the efficacy to cause verbal knowledge (*śabda jñāna*), which in Advaita Vedānta is the only means for knowing Brahman, i.e. gaining ultimate knowledge. The *navya naiyāyikas* suggested that vernacular language can also induce verbal knowledge through invoking the corresponding Sanskrit word indirectly. But Kaunḍa (and also Nīscaldās) suggest that vernacular language can signify directly, just like Sanskrit. To a traditional *mīmāṃsaka*, this is tantamount to heresy as it diminishes the divinely conferred exclusive power of the Vedas.¹⁹⁶

Nīscaldās is clearly aware of how radical his decision to write in the vernacular may appear to be to the pro-Sanskrit establishment, and he defends his choice in multiple places in the *VS*. For example, in the second chapter of the *VS*, where he defends the four requirements (*anubandha*) of the text, he first raises a series of objections that the text cannot be efficacious because the text cannot possibly have an eligible audience (*adhikārī*) (*VS* 2.33-38).¹⁹⁷ Nīscaldās refutes these objections systematically (*VS* 2.61-71). In *VS* 1 5-23), an *adhikārī* is defined as one whose *antaḥ-karaṇa* (lit. inner organ, more on this term in section 5.2, on p. 120) is free from impurities (*mala*) and distractions (*vikṣepa*) but still has ignorance (*ajñāna* or *āvaraṇa*), and who is endowed with the four-fold means (*sādhana-catuṣṭaya*) of

¹⁹⁵ Cf. *sa yo ha vai tatparamaṃ brahma veda brahmaiva bhavati*, *MuU* 3.2.9; *brahmavid āpnoti param*. *TU* 2.1.1.

¹⁹⁶ See Pollock (2001b, 28-30) for a more detailed description of Kaunḍa Bhaṭṭa's argument.

¹⁹⁷ *VS* section references refer to Nīscaldās (1917).

discrimination (*viveka*), detachment (*vairāgya*), the six “wealths” (*ṣaṭ-sampatti*),¹⁹⁸ and the desire for liberation (*mumukṣutā*). Regarding the objection that everyone desires objects and no one desires liberation (*VS* 2.38), Nīscaldās writes¹⁹⁹ (*VS* 2.65):

“Do you say that a) no one seeks liberation (*mokṣa*), or b) there are seekers of liberation, but they do not use texts? If (a), that does not hold, since everyone desires an end to sorrow and eternal joy, which is the nature of liberation. It is not that one only desires happiness derived from objects (*viṣaya-janya*); all desire everlasting happiness alone, which is *mokṣa*. So one is left with objection (b), that all are desirous of liberation (*mumukṣu*), but this text is not efficacious. In this regard, we ask (*VS* 2.66):

- c) Is this text not a means of liberation, and thus not effective?
- d) Or is there a means other than this text, due to whose efficacy one does not engage with this text?
- e) Or is there no one with the eligibility for this text?”

Nīscaldās deals with (e) at length (*VS* 2.68-71), describing a person who is desirous of knowledge (*jijñāsu*) and establishing that this text is efficacious for such a person. Of greater interest to us, in the context of the present discussion concerning his choice to write in the vernacular, is how Nīscaldās addresses (c) and (d). Regarding (c), he states: “The Vedas establish that liberation occurs through knowledge. Knowledge takes place when the ears connect with the utterances of Vedānta (*vedānta-vākya*). Direct knowledge (*aparokṣa-jñāna*) takes places through the contact of the ears with the *mahā-vākyas* (“great utterances”) while indirect knowledge results from contact with the subsidiary statements of Vedānta (*avāntara-vākya*).²⁰⁰ Vedānta here refers to the Upaniṣads. Although this text (*VS*) is different from the Upaniṣads, *sentences in colloquial language with the same meaning are in this text, and, by listening to these, knowledge will occur*” (*VS* 2.66, 36, emphasis mine).

¹⁹⁸ The *ṣaṭ-sampatti*, according to *VS* 1.9-13, 5-6 are 1) restraint of the mind from sense objects (*śama*), 2) restraint of the senses (*dama*), 3) the conviction that the teacher and the Vedas are true (*śraddhā*), 4) the end of the mind’s distraction (*samādhāna*), 5) forsaking all acts along with means, objects, and women (*uparāma*), 6) forbearance/tolerance (*titikṣā*)

¹⁹⁹ What follows is my abridged and edited rendering of Nīscaldās’s writing, not a literal translation.

²⁰⁰ With these comments, Nīscaldās opposes Vidyāraṇya and others who hold that *śravaṇa*, *manana* and *nididhyāsana* all are required to gain *aparokṣa-jñāna*. See *VS* 1.21-23 for greater details. Nīscaldās does not name Vidyāraṇya specifically, but refers to an *ekadeśī*. Pt. Pītāmbār further elaborates that an *ekadeśī* is one who holds to a portion of the established Vedānta doctrine (*siddhānta*) but independently reads more into it. Pt. Pītāmbār pointedly states that this refers to Vidyāraṇya and not Bhartṛprapañca (Nīscaldās 1917b, 13n42). For a brief overview of Bhartṛprapañca vs. Śaṅkara, see Malkovsky (2001, 103-106).

Nīścaldās also offers a response regarding objection (d), the argument that there are many other Sanskrit texts such as the Upaniṣads, *Brahma-sūtra*, and commentaries that explain the unity of *jīva* and Brahman, and are hence means of liberation, having the same prerequisites (*adhikāra*) as for the *VS*, thereby rendering *VS* superfluous. Nīścaldās states: “Although this is true, for those whose intellect is not capable of understanding the content [of texts in Sanskrit], such seekers will not derive knowledge from these texts. For such persons of duller intellect (*manda-buddhi*), this text [in the vernacular] will be effective” (36). This statement very clearly states Nīścaldās's intent to make liberation accessible to those unable to access Sanskrit texts.

Nīścaldās returns to the issue of the efficaciousness of vernacular languages in *VS* 3.99. We have already encountered the *dohā*, *VS* v. 3.10 (on page 80), where Nīścaldās proclaims that one who knows Brahman is Brahman itself, and the utterances of such a person, be they in Sanskrit or the vernacular, remove the erroneous notions of duality. In his commentary, he elaborates: “*It is not the rule that ‘knowledge does not occur without the Vedic statements’* (emphasis mine). The knowledge of the causes of illnesses and their medicine recorded in the Ayurveda can also be gained from other Sanskrit texts, as well as from Farsi and vernacular texts. Similarly, the knowledge of the identity of Brahman and *ātmā* can also occur through vernacular texts. If knowledge could not occur without the Vedas, then the entire *smṛti* [humanly conceived secondary scriptures], *purāṇa* [sacred texts containing stories, legends, hymns and instructions of various deities, sages and kings] and *itihāsa* texts [historical texts, including the *Rāmāyaṇa* and *MBh*] propounding the knowledge of Brahman would become futile. Hence it is established that knowledge can also occur through vernacular texts” (*VS* 3.99, 59-60). Nīścaldās is directly and plainly refuting those who hold that only the Sanskrit language can signify knowledge of Brahman.

Despite being so bold and outspoken regarding the efficacy of the vernacular to effect liberation, Nīścaldās provides a glimpse into how deep-seated the pro-Sanskrit tendencies were in the nineteenth century, even within himself. In *VS* 6, Nīścaldās accepts *dr̥ṣṭi-sr̥ṣṭi-vāda*, the theory that perception is creation. Prince Tarkadṛṣṭi (lit. “he whose perspective is argumentative”), one of the three princes in the broader *VS* frame story, and who is symbolic

of the lowest grade of spiritual seeker,²⁰¹ raises the objection that if existence (*saṃsāra*) were like a dream, then there would be no beginning-less ignorance, and thus, all the means for the removal of ignorance would be futile. In response, Niścaldās narrates the tale of (fictional) King Agr̥dhadeva (lit. “lord without desire”) who has a dream wherein he sees himself as an outcaste (*cāṇḍāla*) trapped in an endless forest (*VS* 6.330-452, 203-83). In the dream, Agr̥dhadeva approaches a guru and requests the teacher to free him from the forest and from his outcaste status. Before commencing the narration of the dream-guru, Niścaldās remarks that the guru’s teachings to Agr̥dhadeva were in Sanskrit, which Niścaldās then presents in the vernacular (*VS* 6.333, 206)! Since this tale is Niścaldās’s creation, the guru could just as easily have directly instructed Agr̥dhadeva in the vernacular instead of Sanskrit. This would be even more justifiable, since in the dream Agr̥dhadeva is an outcaste who does not know Sanskrit. But the dominant mindset still prevails even for Niścaldās, that gurus instruct kings in Sanskrit (even one dreaming that he is an outcaste), and, even in vernacular tales, one must hold to that convention.

In concluding the section that knowledge is the cause for liberation (*VS* 6.375-406, 233-50), having stated the essence (*sāra*) of the Vedas that knowledge alone effects liberation, and not karma, Niścaldās provides a seemingly apologetic section (*VS* 6.401, 245-6) on the conventions (*sampradāya*) of the vernacular:

laghu guru guru laghu hota hai, vṛtti hetu uccāra;
rū hvai aru kī ṭhaura meṃ, ava kī ṭhaura vakāra. (VS 6.401, 245-6 v. 1)

For metrical purposes, a long vowel is pronounced short and vice versa,
[The syllable] *rū* occurs in place of *aru*, and *va* in place of *ava*.

saṃyogī kṣa cha ru ṣa kha hota hai,²⁰² nahīm ṭa-varga ṇakāra;
bhāṣā meṃ ṛ ḷ hu nahīm, aru tālavya śakāra. (VS 6.401, 246 v. 2)

kṣa occurs as *cha* and *ṣa* as *kha*, the retroflex consonants [including] *ṇa* do not occur,
In the vernacular, *ṛ* and *ḷ* do not occur, nor the palatal *śa*.

²⁰¹ See n. 580 on p. 314 for an explanation of the three types of spiritual seekers.

²⁰² The first *pada* of this line seems corrupt. Niścaldās (1917, 246) has: *saṃyogau kṣa na ka para kha na*. Niścaldās (1967, 330) has: *saṃyogo kṣa na ka para kha na*. To be metrically consistent with the prior verse, I have followed a slightly modified version of the *pada* given Niścaldās (1994, 280): *saṃyogī kṣa cha ru ṣa kha na*. All three versions are metrically problematic. In fact, neither verse follows the standard 6+4+3, 6+4+1 *dohā* arrangement; instead we have 4+4+3, 5+3; 8,5+3. I also assume that *vṛtti* in the first verse is pronounced as three syllables, *viriti*, *metri causa*.

Nīścaldās appears to be addressing potential criticism from *mīmāṃsakas* when he states in the commentary that “so many letters do not occur in the vernacular; were they to be used, the learned (*kavi*) would say they were improper (*aśuddha*) ” (*VS* 6.401, 246).

4.2 Nīścaldās vis-à-vis Pollock’s Theories of Vernacularization

Pollock believes that “breaks in cultural communication” began to take effect during 1000-1500 (1998, 45). According to his findings, the dates for the start of vernacularization in various languages are as follows: Kannada, ninth-tenth century; Tamil, 1000-1200; Sinhala, ca. 1250; Gujarati, by the end of the twelfth century; Assamese, by the fourteenth century; Oriya and Malayalam, by the fifteenth century (49-54). It is instructive to compare these dates with what is known regarding the creation of independent Advaita Vedānta literature in the vernacular in Table 2 below.²⁰³

It is interesting to note that Pollock does not consider Hindi in this context. Elsewhere, he notes a Braj prose “work in metaphysics,” *Siddhāntabodha* by Jasvant Siṃha, the king of Jodhpur, dating to ca. 1650 CE (2001b, 26n39). However, its content is far too sparse to be considered a significant independent philosophical work.²⁰⁴ Fortunately, we have McGregor’s survey, *Hindi Literature from its Beginnings to the Nineteenth Century* (1984), according to which the Hindi literature tradition begins between 1200-1450. All works connected with Vedānta that are listed by McGregor are either translations of Sanskrit texts, for example, the Braj translation of the *Prabodhacandrodaya* in 1544 (103),²⁰⁵ or works in verse with Vedāntic viewpoints, such as Dādūpanthī Sundardās’s *Jñānasamudra* (1653), Akṣar-Ananya’s (b. 1653) “eclectic adaptation of Vedānta”, Gokulprasād Brij’s *Śok-vināś* (1877) “on Vedānta topics and the frailty of the world” expressed through “a father’s bereavement and the consolation of faith” (137, 142, 202). We find no mention of Nīścaldās

²⁰³ Dates for earliest independent Advaita Vedānta literature in languages other than Hindi are from the section “Advaita in Vernaculars” in Balasubramanian (2000, 443-665). The authors for the sections on each language considered take into account both metrical and non-metrical works that are not translations of pre-existing works.

²⁰⁴ The *Siddhāntabodha* (Siṃha 1972) is a discourse between teacher and student on Brahman from an Advaita standpoint. The printed version is 19 pages and concludes with a two-page, 12-verse metrical summary. If one subtracts the footnotes providing the critical apparatus, the actual body of the discourse is barely nine pages (including the metrical summary). This gives one a clear indication of the depth at which matters are expounded in this work, particularly when compared with typical Advaita works, whether metrical or in prose.

²⁰⁵ *Prabodhacandrodaya* is a theistic Vaishnava Vedānta allegorical drama by Kṛṣṇamiśra, eleventh century.

in this volume.²⁰⁶ If we consider these metrical works to be Advaita literature, then the earliest date for Hindi would be the mid-seventeenth century, but according to Shrivastava (2000), other Hindi works on Advaita, prior to Nīscaldās's, have been in the *sant* tradition and are mostly devotional poems, even if they deal with *nirguṇa* (attribute-less) Brahman. Quite clearly, although Nīscaldās is not the first to compose works in the vernacular,²⁰⁷ he is the first author to write an Advaita Vedānta *prakaraṇa-grantha* (independent treatise) in Hindi, be it verse or prose, whose philosophical rigor is comparable to those in Sanskrit. In doing so, Nīscaldās was possibly influenced by the Dādūpanthī tradition of making their works widely accessible to the average person.

	<i>Start of Vernacularization</i> ²⁰⁸	<i>Earliest Known Vernacular Independent Advaita Literature</i>	<i>Time Lag (centuries)</i>
Kannada	9 th -10 th c.	15 th c.	5-6
Tamil	11 th -12 th c.	late 14 th -early 15 th c.	2-4
Telugu	11 th c. ²⁰⁹	15 th c.	4
Sinhala	ca. 1250	no data	-
Gujarati	by end of 12 th c.	17 th c.	5
Assamese	by the 14 th c.	no data	-
Malayalam	by the 15 th c.	19 th c.	4
Oriya	by the 15 th c.	no data	-
Marathi	11 th -12 th c. ²¹⁰	12 th c.	0-1
Hindi	1200-1450 ²¹¹	19 th c.	4.5-7

Table 2: Vernacularization vs. Independent Advaita Literature

There is an average time lag of four or five centuries between the start of literary vernacularization and the appearance of independent Advaita texts in the vernacular.²¹²

Halbfass writes that in Indian thought, “the present lags the past” and that there is a

²⁰⁶ McGregor's earlier survey in the same series, *Hindi literature of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries* (1974) also has no mention of Nīscaldās, nor for that matter, of any philosophical literature.

²⁰⁷ Among the Dādūpanthīs, others, most notably the founder Dādū Dayāl (sixteenth c.) and Sundardās (seventeenth c.) also composed vernacular philosophical/metaphysical works. We have also seen earlier, in connection with *VS* v. 1.8, mention, by Nīscaldās himself, of vernacular works by Manohardās and Māṇakbodh, (on p. 77). Shrivastava also includes Kabir (1398-1448), Nānak (1469-1539), Ravidās (fifteenth c.), Tulsīdās (1532-1623) and others in the *sant* category (2000, 590).

²⁰⁸ Unless specifically mentioned, the dates are from Pollock (49-54).

²⁰⁹ Rao (2003, 390-93).

²¹⁰ According to Tulpule (1979, 313-15).

²¹¹ McGregor (1984, 10-12). Also McGregor (2003, 912-15).

²¹² Marathi philosophical literature appears to be the one exception to this pattern, as the earliest Marathi literature itself is philosophical in nature: the *Viveka-darpaṇa*, “a philosophical treatise written in rhythmic prose and narrating the theory and practice of *yoga* as propounded by the Nāthas” (Tulpule 1979, 314).

“tendency to dispense with all claims to new discoveries and ideas and to project all insights back into the basic texts and into the most ancient past” (1988b, 364). I suggest instead that the lag in the case of vernacular Advaita texts has to do with the nature of the body of literature here, i.e., philosophical texts. Until the creation of works in the vernacular, these philosophical texts were exclusively in Sanskrit, and it is unthinkable to advance a serious study of this material without knowledge of Sanskrit, since “understanding anything later, ... always presupposes understanding everything earlier” (Pollock 2001b, 3). As Pollock suggests, the fact that some intellectuals in the seventeenth century “began to identify themselves or their opponents as *navya* or ‘new’ scholars ... appears to signify not just a different relationship with the past but a different way of thinking. ... [A] new conception of the development of knowledge itself had come into being” (2001b, 5-7). Earlier, “all intellectual generations, disembedded from any spatio-temporal framework, were thought of as coexistent: the past was a very present conversation partner. ... a superior partner, the master who made the primary statements in a discussion upon which later participants could only comment. In the face of the grandeur of the past, intellectuals typically assumed an attitude of inferiority”. By the seventeenth century, however, there was a shift in thinking such that “‘new’ has ceased to connote ‘worse’, and instead effectively serves to signify the furthest point of advancement in a discourse” (7).

Pollock suggests that in the seventeenth century, “historicist periodisation [*sic*, this article uses British spelling conventions] for the first time becomes the very modality of understanding how knowledge is to be organized, and, more important, how new knowledge can actually be produced” (10). “The production of independent treatises (*prakaraṇa-grantha*) and of works that directly comment on *sūtra* texts while summarising the entire earlier history of interpretation,” and “the concomitant decrease in ever more deeply nested commentaries on canonical works that had been a hallmark of the earlier schoolmen [*sic*]” signals an appearance of this new historicist perspective that had not been present earlier. What is apparent in such independent treatises is an utterly new “modality of understanding how knowledge is to be organised, and ... how new knowledge can actually be produced” (10).

While the shift to the vernacular language might have been slower in the case of philosophical literature, other shifts that marked this “new intellectual” in Pollock’s

comments, such as development of a philological and text-critical approach, occurred earlier. In the case of Nyāya commentarial literature in Sanskrit, Karin Preisendanz observes this taking place as early as the fifteenth century (2005, 70-72, 80-81). These fifteenth-century Sanskrit Naiyāyikas were precursors to those that made their way into the vernacular as “focused independent treatises ... unburdened or unimpeded by the task of Sūtra exegesis and apologetics,” concerned with a “historicist search for originality and authenticity” and “cultural self-assertion and legitimization” (2005, 85-86).

I suggest that in the area of philosophical literature, these new modalities of understanding and structuring knowledge were first perfected in Sanskrit before the final shift took place for the production of texts in the vernacular. Owing to the already large volume of Sanskrit philosophical literature and its continued production, it was going to take some time to structure these writings in the new ways that reflected an awareness of a historicist periodization. This may explain the time lag of a few centuries as evident in Table 2 above. And it is this time lag that may account for the fact that, during the seventeenth century, “many domains of systematic thought–logic–epistemology–ontology (*nyāya*), text–hermeneutics (*mīmāṃsā*), moral philosophy (*dharmaśāstra*)—had been wholly impervious to vernacular penetration” (Pollock 2001b, 26). It may also explain the “continuing vitality of [Sanskrit in] the tradition of logic, for example, where a work like Viśvanātha Tarkapañcānana's *Siddhānta-muktāvalī* (Compendium of Principles) from the mid-seventeenth century could undertake to reorganize received wisdom (though not overturn it) and quickly find a place in the philosophical syllabus²¹³ over much of the Indian subcontinent. The distribution of scholarly works demonstrates unequivocally that even up to the early eighteenth century, in the disciplines where Sanskrit intellectuals continued to maintain control, old networks of vast circulation and readership were as yet intact” (Pollock 2001a, 413). In the case of Nīścaldās's vernacular *VP* in the nineteenth century, the awareness of the historicist periodization of Nyāya and Advaita thought greatly influences the structuring of his arguments. Thus, in the seventeenth century, new “knowledge production” within philosophical literature continues to take place in Sanskrit, and, in the

²¹³ The *Siddhānta-muktāvalī* is Viśvanātha Pañcānana's auto-commentary on the *Bhāṣā-pariccheda* or *Kārikāvalī*, comprising 166 stanzas, and is considered an elementary textbook on the terms of logic (*nyāya*) of the Navadvīpa school. These “were known by heart by thousands of paṇḍits” (Matilal 1977b, 110). It is part of the traditional elementary curriculum of study for Nyāya to this day (Viśvanātha 1940, iii).

nineteenth century, Nīścaldās may have been the first to carry this new modality into the vernacular. Both *VS* and *VP* are independent treatises that reorganize vast swaths of Advaita thought, and in doing so seem to bring out a freshness and relevance of the subject that was in danger of being suffocated by the centuries of commentarial argumentation and counter-refutation carried out in Sanskrit.

However, there are limits to the innovation carried out. Pollock suggests that “[the] new historicity and the awareness it seems to imply of the possibility of new truths are clearly in evidence, but remain securely anchored in a very old practice of thought, on an invariant set of questions” and that these questions remained “without exception, questions inherited from tradition” (2001b, 14, 16). He sees this as indicative of “a serious tension in a newness that could not achieve innovation: a newness of the intellect constrained by an oldness of the will” (2001b, 19). The primary question that Nīścaldās is addressing in *VP* – “what is a *vr̥tti* and what is its role in knowing Brahman?” – is certainly inherited from the Advaita tradition. However, answering that question and remaining consistent with the tradition leaves little room for innovation. The originality comes, as Pollock himself suggests, in the organization of prior knowledge, and, in this process, the sorting out and comparison of various prior standpoints results in the presentation of what Nīścaldās holds as valid and consistent with Advaita doctrine, and the refutation of other conflicting views where relevant. And although this activity might not count as the production of “new” knowledge, *per se*, it helps produce greater clarity in the understanding of existing knowledge, thus contributing to the high regard of *VP*.

Were there larger motives behind Nīścaldās’s decision to compose works exclusively in the vernacular, namely, those of “culture and power *outside of a national narrative*,” as Pollock suggests (1998, 65)?²¹⁴ Both Vasudha Dalmia, with her study of Bhāratendu Hariścandra in Benares (1997), and Brian Hatcher, in his study of Bengali pandits (2005), posit that vernacularity is closely linked with colonization and nationalization. Pollock believes that it is not necessarily so, even though he is aware that “no unified theory may account for the manifold relations to the social and political domains in which this transformation took place” (1998, 69). Based on my reading of the limited historical data

²¹⁴ Emphasis mine.

available regarding Niścaldās, there appear to be no colonizing and nationalizing factors in his decision to write in the vernacular. His patron, Rājā Rāmsiṃha is closely connected to, and even supported by colonial power but at the same time is an old-fashioned traditionalist who considers himself to be a patron of the intellectuals and a lover of Sanskrit culture (as we learned in section 2.11). Nevertheless, cultural and power issues are certainly at play, as can be seen from the caste (*jāti*) discrimination that Niścaldās is said to have encountered as a student, as well as from Rājā Rāmsiṃha's patronage for his production of *VP*, since he wished for a text, even if in the vernacular, that could hold its own among the learned pandits in his court.

According to Pollock, "Sanskrit intellectuals never directly confronted colonialism, whether as a political or an epistemological order; virtually without exception they simply ignored it" (2001b, 31). But Dalmia and Hatcher's accounts certainly contradict this assertion. They provide many significant examples of pandits trying to work either with or against the colonizing forces or attempting to manipulate these forces for self-serving purposes, albeit with very short-sighted perspectives. During Niścaldās's time, there were certainly colonizing and nationalizing forces at play in other parts of the country, yet even if these were occurring in Niścaldās's region, it is highly unlikely that Niścaldās, as a Dādūpanthī and a Vedāntin, would have done anything about them. I am reminded of an anecdote about Ramana Maharshi (1879-1950), a Vedāntin who was familiar with Niścaldās's *VS*. When asked to aid India's independence struggle, Ramana is said to have responded, "If you see a fire on the cinema screen, do you rush to put it out with water? This struggle for independence is like a fire on the movie screen."²¹⁵ This anecdotal stance of Ramana's is corroborated by Ramana's answer to the question "Should I try to help the suffering in the world?" Ramana replies, "The Power that created you created the world as well. If God created the world it is His business to look after it, not yours" (Osborne 1971, 87).²¹⁶ A Vedāntin would say that such a stance constitutes "ignoring" colonialism (in Pollock's terms) only from the conventional (*vyāvahārika*) standpoint. When one has

²¹⁵ As narrated by Swāmī Satsvarūpānanda Sarasvatī in a public Vedānta discourse, ca. 1986, in Pune. A similar analogy of fire on a cinema screen is also present in Ramana's Talk 316, without any reference to the independence movement (Maharshi 2006, 290)

²¹⁶ Osborne clarifies further that Ramana did not condone "callousness to human suffering. ... What was forbidden was only the self-importance in trying to act the part of providence" (87).

realized one's identity with Brahman, then from that ultimate (*pāramārthika*) standpoint, Ramana Maharshi's response is perfectly consistent. Nīścaldās also, as noted earlier,²¹⁷ uncompromisingly identifies with the ultimate standpoint: he proclaims in *VS* v. 3.10 that “a knower of Brahman is Brahman incarnate, and his speech is the Veda.”

Vernacularization of knowledge also has an effect on its distribution. Both Ulrike Stark and Vasudha Dalmia point out that “widely disseminated printed texts contributed substantially to the ‘democratization of religious knowledge’ in the modern vernacular.”²¹⁸ Thus, one measure of the influence of a text in Vedānta is the secondary literature that stems from it. For the *VS*, we have Pandit Pītāmbar's *ṭippaṇī* (gloss), written in 1917. Pītāmbar also wrote an abridgment of *VP*, called *Vṛttiratnāvalī*, published in the same volume.²¹⁹ In similar vein are the *Vedānta-pradīpikā* by Lakṣānanda, an abridgement of the *VS* (Siṃha 1981, 92), a Marathi commentary by ‘Sākhare’ Kisan Mahārāj (Kapil 2005, 247), as well as the translations into numerous languages. The Hindi *VS* has been available in various versions since at least 1917, if not earlier (Kapil 2005, 245).²²⁰ A Khemrāj Śrīkrṣṇadās (KS) edition has been available since at least 1906.²²¹ It is regularly studied by Advaita Vedāntin monks in Benares, Rishikesh and Haridwar and has even been translated into Sanskrit (Nīścaldās 1964). The *VP* too has been in print continuously since 1899, published virtually unchanged by Khemrāj Śrīkrṣṇadās and the Venkaṭeśvar Steam Press in Mumbai. It is the only version readily available, in a form that has remained virtually unchanged for at least 50 years even though it is plagued by many typographical errors, and other incongruities.²²² Ātmānand

²¹⁷ In this chapter, on page 79.

²¹⁸ Stark (2004, 266), quoting Dalmia (1997, 225).

²¹⁹ *VS* with *Vṛttiratnāvalī* has been reprinted multiple times and is cited here as Nīścaldās (1917).

²²⁰ The 1917 edition by Brajballabh Hariprasād (Nīścaldās 1917a) was the fifth edition (*pañcamāvṛtti*).

²²¹ The 1917 Gurgaon edition (Nīścaldās 1917a), as well as the 2005 KS edition of *VS* (Nīścaldās 1917b), both interestingly carry a picture of one Śarīf Sālemahammad (the name is given both as “sālemahammad” and “sāle mahammad” on facing pages) and on the facing page a declaration that “we have received all the rights including registry to this book from Śarīf Sāle Mahammad's sons Dāūd Bhāī and Allādīnbhāī.” [*is pustak-ko śarīf sāle mahammad inhīm-ke putra dāūd bhāī aur allādīn-bhāī inke pās se sab rajistarī-hak-sahit le liyā hai.*]. There is also the further declaration: “This edition has been printed based on the edition publicized by the well-known Sāle Mahammad – *Yah āvṛtti sujña sāle-mahammad-kī prasiddha kī huī āvṛtti parse chapī hai.*” These references persist in the 2005 KS edition. The presence of these preserved references, virtually unchanged since 1917, to a clearly Muslim man by publishers of Hindu texts is very intriguing. Could he have been a publisher from some other part of the country? Śarīf Sāle[h] Muhammad's picture is also preserved in the 1917 Brajballabh Hariprasād edition from Bombay (Nīścaldās 1917a) with similar text in the inside title page regarding transfer of rights from his sons. On the title page, the publisher states that “all rights have been retained by registry of this book according to the 25th rule of the [Vikram Saṃvat] year 1967 (1910 CE).” [*v*]/i.sa.1967 ke 25 vēm kāyade anusār yah graṃth prakāt-kartā nai rejistar karike sarva hak svādhīn rakhe haiṃ.]

²²² Muni (1969, 53): *aśuddhiyomkā to koī pār hī nahīm...* A detailed discussion of the nature of errors found in the various versions is provided (54-55). Also see Appendix 2, p. 411.

Muni undertook a painstaking edit of the text in 1969 without the benefit of any handwritten manuscripts, and his edition, though superior, was probably published in a small run and has been out of print for nearly 40 years. (See Appendices 2 and 3). One can only conjecture as to the impact on the *VP*'s renown had this version been more widely published and distributed. Conversely, the *YP* has virtually dropped out of sight.²²³ Meanwhile, the high regard of the *VS* and *VP* confirms Pollock's observation that "vernacular writings themselves became new scriptures (1998, 63)" and fits in well with Nīscaldās's own stance on scripture, which we shall examine in section 10.10. Ironically, Pollock suggests that this "age of vernacularity" is coming to a close and "an epoch of 'postliteracy' has begun where national languages take on the status of dead languages" (1998, 69-70). While studying *VP* in Rishikesh in 2006, I encountered passages whose Bāṅgrū/Haryānvī dialect stumped even the swami with whom I was studying.

4.3 Nīscaldās on Caste (*Jāti*)

If indeed Nīscaldās's experience of caste discrimination was a significant factor in his decision to write in the vernacular, it will be helpful to explore what he has to say on the matter of caste. In the final chapter of *VP* (8.110, 412), Nīscaldās expresses his opinions in no uncertain terms: "If, due to residual traces (*saṃskāra*) from prior lives, even persons of the lowest caste get the desire to know [Brahman] (*jijñāsā*), then by hearing spiritual discourse they too will get knowledge [of Brahman] and will get liberated through the cessation of ignorance and also of its effects. Like the gods and demons, all humans have the right to knowledge of [the highest] truth [i.e., Brahman]."²²⁴ This passage occurs at the conclusion of a section considering the eligibility of kṣatriyas and vaiśyas for renunciation (*sannyāsa*), and whether only renunciates are qualified for listening (*śravaṇa*) to Vedānta (*VP* 8.100-110, 407-12). Nīscaldās presents various opinions before arriving at his pronouncement. For example, he presents the view of some (unnamed) author that śūdras are ineligible for *śravaṇa* (*VP* 8.108, 411) because as per *Manu-smṛti* 4.80a, "*na śūdrāya matiṃ dadyāt*, śūdras should not be given knowledge," followed by that of another (unnamed)

²²³ The most recent edition of *YP* dates to 1959 in Kapil (2005, 247).

²²⁴ *janmāntara saṃskāra tai antyajādikan kṛ bhī jijñāsā hoy jāve to pauruṣeya vacana tai tinka bhī jñāna hoy ke kārya sahita avidyā kī nivṛttirūpa mokṣa hovai haiṃ. yāte deva asuran kī nāī sakala manuṣyan kṛ tattvajñāna kṛ adhikāra hai.* Also Siṃha (1981, 4). See *VP* 8.102-9, 408-412 for other opinions on *jātis* and their *adhikāra* for *sannyāsa* and *brahma-śravaṇa* considered and refuted. The text of *VP* 8.109-10 is considered in entirety in Appendix 2.

author (*VP* 8.109) that, although śūdras are ineligible for listening to the Vedas since they are not enjoined to have the sacred-thread ceremony (*upanayana*), they are eligible for listening to *itihāsa* and *purāṇas*, etc., because it is said, “*śrāvayec caturō varṇān*, all four castes (*varṇa*) ought to be taught [*MBh Śānti-parvan* 12.314.45c].”²²⁵ He resolves the conflict as follows: all good karma is useful for knowledge, and even śūdras are eligible to perform good karma. By performing good karma, they purify their *antaḥ-karaṇa* and thereby can attain knowledge. In support of this view, he cites Śaṅkara: “The eligibility for studying Vedas is only after the *upanayana*, but although a śūdra is ineligible for study of the Vedas due to lack of the *upanayana*, if one should arrive at knowledge through listening to the *purāṇas* and the like, at the very instant of knowing, the śūdra too can attain liberation without any obstacles.”²²⁶

This is a loose and selective paraphrase by Nīścaldās; the section in the *BS* where this occurs, *BS* 1.3.34-38 (*adhikaraṇa* 9) is even titled “The ineligibility of the śūdra (*apaśūdrādhikaraṇam*²²⁷)!” Śaṅkara does not appear to be consistent in his statements about śūdras. He states, “the śūdra is ineligible, because he has not studied the Vedas. ... He cannot study the Vedas, since the study requires *upanayana*, and only the three [higher] castes are eligible for that” (*BS ŚBh* 1.3.34).²²⁸ However, he also concedes that “It is not possible to withhold the attainment of the result [of knowledge, i.e., liberation] from those in whom knowledge arises as a result of [positive] tendencies (*saṃskāra*) developed in past lives, such as for Vidura, Dharmavyādha²²⁹ and others, because the *smṛti* texts do state the eligibility of all four castes (*varṇa*) to study the *itihāsa* and *purāṇas* [in *MBh Śānti-parvan* 12.314.45c,²³⁰

²²⁵ More on the full context of this verse when I look at the *MBh* in section 4.5 (on page 103).

²²⁶ *upanayana-pūrvak veda kā adhyayan kahyā hai; au śūdrakūṃ upanayana ke abhāva taim yadyapi veda maim adhikāra nahīm, tathāpi purāṇādik śravaṇa taim śūdra kūṃ bhī jñān hoy jāvai tau jñān-samakāl hī śūdra kā bhī pratibadha-rahita mokṣa hovai hai.*

²²⁷ The translation I provide for *apa-śūdra* reflects the negating aspect of the *apa-* prefix and also Śaṅkara’s overall tone on this matter. Gambhirananda titles this section “pseudo-śūdra” (Śaṅkarācārya, Bādarāyaṇa, and Gambhirananda 1965, 229), while Vajpeyi takes a more neutral stance with “subsection about making an exception of the *śūdra*” (2011, 339).

²²⁸ *na śūdrasyādhikārah, vedādhyayanābhāvāt. ... naca śūdrasya vedādhyayanam asti, upanayana-pūrvakatvād vedādhyayanasya. upanayanasya ca varṇatrayaviśayatvāt.*

²²⁹ Dharmavyādha, “the righteous butcher/fowler,” is the central character of the *Vyādha-gītā*, *MBh* 3.197-202. Though a butcher and thus of low caste, he is enlightened, and he instructs the brahman who seeks him out. The narrative is summarized in Kinsley (1993, 159) and by Agarwal (2002). The entire narrative is translated by van Buitenen (1975, 614-20).

²³⁰ Also see the detailed discussion on the full context of *MBh* 12.314.45 to follow (on page 18).

cited earlier]” (*BS ŚBh* 1.3.38).²³¹ However, Śaṅkara concludes the section (*adhikaraṇa*) with the statement “It is established (*sthitam*) that śūdras do not have the eligibility to Vedic knowledge,”²³² while only a few sentences earlier²³³ he has cited or alluded to choice selections from the *dharmaśāstras* such as “should [a śūdra] happen to hear the Vedas, [the expiation consists of] filling his ears with lead and lac [i.e., shellac or sealing wax]. If he should utter [the Vedas], his tongue should be cut. If he should commit it to memory, his body should be chopped to pieces,”²³⁴ “a śūdra is indeed a walking crematorium; therefore, one should not study in the vicinity of a śūdra.”²³⁵ Setting aside briefly the internal contradiction²³⁶ between Śaṅkara’s dominant stance on śūdras in this *BS adhikaraṇa* and his concessive statement (I will shortly return to this, in section 4.4 below), it is quite evident that Nīścaldās considers śūdras to be as eligible for liberation as the three other castes, even though he conforms with tradition in agreeing that the knowledge in their case will occur through non-Vedic texts, to which class his vernacular writings also belong. As Ananya Vajpeyi puts it, “[t]he śūdra, mostly shut out altogether, is, at best, the designated eavesdropper” (2010, 159). Here we have Nīścaldās trying to modify the situation, at least as regards their access to knowledge of liberation.

In the conclusion of the section regarding who is eligible for Brahman-realization (*tattva-jñāna*), *VP* 8.110-11, 412-3, Nīścaldās writes: “Only humans have the ability (*sāmarthya*) for Brahman-realization; only a body without a self can be considered ineligible for knowledge. Brahman-realization is attained only by a body in which the Divine Properties (*daivī-sampadā*)²³⁷ are in residence. All beings have compassion (*dayā*); it is only possible for brahmins to have forbearance (*kṣamā*), truth (*satya*), honesty/uprightness (*ārjava*), and

²³¹ *yeṣāṃ punaḥ pūrva-kṛta-saṃskāra-vaśād vidura-dharmavyādha-prabhṛtīnāṃ jñānotpattis teṣāṃ na śakyate phala-prāptiḥ pratiṣeddhum, jñānasyaikāntika-phalatvāt. “śrāvayec caturo varṇān” iti cetihāsa-purāṇādhigame cāturvarṇasyādhikāra smaraṇāt.*

²³² *veda-pūrvakas tu nāsty adhikāraḥ śūdrāṇām iti sthitam.*

²³³ Still in *BS ŚBh* 1.3.38.

²³⁴ *athāsya vedam upaśṛṇvatas trapu-jatubhyāṃ śrotra-pratipūraṇam. udāharaṇe jihvācchedo. dhāraṇe śarīra-bhedaḥ. Gau. Dh. Sū. 12.4-6*

²³⁵ *padī u ha vā etac chmaśānaṃ yac chūdras tasmāc chūdra-samīpe nādhyetavyam. Vā. Dh. Sū. 18.11-12* [as occurs in Śaṅkarācārya (1965, 233n53). Var. replaces *padī u hā* with *eke* (Führer 1914?, 54)]

²³⁶ Appayya Dīkṣita (1520-1593), in the third chapter of his *SLS*, suggests that the *apaśūdrādhikaraṇam* merely indicates the ineligibility of the śūdra for *saguṇa* contemplation of Brahman, but cannot possibly make the śūdra ineligible for the means to know *nirguṇa* Brahman, since the desire for that topic of knowledge is prompted by its attractiveness, *nirguṇa-vidyāyāṃ śūdrasyāpi viśaya-saundarya-prayuktasyārthitvasya niṣeddhum aśakyatvād*. But since the śūdra cannot study the Vedas, according to the *SLS* he only has recourse to studying the *itihāsa* and *purāṇas*, and to performing karma that will lead to birth in another body of a higher caste, and thereby to liberation (Dīkṣita, Tīrtha, and Sāstrī 1890, 90).

²³⁷ For an enumeration of the Divine Properties (*daivī-sampadā*) per *BhG* 16.1-3, see n. 572, p. 295.

contentment (*santoṣa*), etc. Since kṣatriyas possess the quality of being active (*pravṛtti-dharma*) for the sake of protecting their subjects (*prajā*), they have fewer Divine Properties than brahmins. However, since their violence towards wicked beings for the protection of the subjects arises from a sense of duty, it is actually non-violence, and, as a result, it is not impossible for a kṣatriya to have the Divine Properties. Vaiśyas perform even more physical activity such as agriculture and trade, and it is not possible for them to have occasion for contemplation of *ātmā*. Nevertheless, many fortunate vaiśyas succeed (*nirvāha*) in activities without physical functioning and thereby can gain the Divine Properties. Some teachers hold the view that kṣatriyas and vaiśyas are eligible for renunciation, and consider the Divine Properties easily attainable by them as well. Although it is hard for śūdras and the lowest caste (*antya-jāti*) to attain the Divine Properties, the results of action are of infinite kinds. Therefore, if they too should acquire the Divine Properties due to actions of prior lives, then a śūdra, by listening to the *purāṇas* and such, and the lowest caste, by listening to vernacular commentaries (*bhāṣā-prabandha*) and the like, can also attain liberation without obstruction by means of devotion to God, and thereby attain Brahman-realization. Thus, humans alone [as opposed to gods and demons] are eligible for devotion to God and Brahman-realization – this is the conclusion (*nirdhāra*) of all scripture (*śāstra*).”

In *VS* 2.83, Nīścaldās states that caste as a property does not reside in the *ātmā* and the subtle body (*sūkṣma-śarīra*) but only in the gross body (*sthūla-śarīra*). The caste (*jāti*) of the gross body is mistakenly attributed to the *ātmā*, just like a snake is superimposed (*adhyāsa*) on a rope. In fact, *ātmā* and caste are very dissimilar: *ātmā* is pervasive, caste is limited; *ātmā* is internal (*pratyak*) and caste is external (*parāk*); *ātmā* is the subject (*viśayī*) while caste is the object (*viśaya*) (47). Here, Nīścaldās is being very inclusive in stating that all humans are eligible for Brahman-realization, and claiming that all śāstras teach this. Identifying with one’s caste is a case of mistaken identity because, from the Advaita standpoint, caste is a delusion and is not real. But curiously, in the *VS*, Nīścaldās appears to accept implicitly the restrictions imposed on śūdras and lower castes, namely that they are not permitted to read or study the Vedas but can only listen to the *smṛti* texts such as the *itihāsa*, *purāṇas* and vernacular texts. This suggests that at least one motive for composing his works in the vernacular was to make them accessible to the widest audience, particularly those members who have no recourse to Sanskrit.

4.4 More on Śaṅkara and Caste: The Case of the *Maniṣā-pañcakam*

How does one reconcile the contradiction between Śaṅkara's hardline stance against śūdras as seen earlier in his *BS ŚBh* on Adhikaraṇa 1.3.9 with his concessive statement granting śūdras the eligibility to gain Brahman-knowledge through study of *itihāsa* and *purāṇas*? Śaṅkara's commentary on the *BS* is considered his magnum opus and it is believed that this work was addressed to the *Mīmāṃsaka* orthodoxy. Hence, he is "very careful not to depart from tradition (Ingalls 1954, 295)" and to "suppress his originality by attempting to prove that his ideas are those of Bādarāyaṇa and the Upaniṣads" (Eliot 1921, 2:312). "Although Śaṅkara understood his teaching to be accessible to all castes, for sociohistorical and/or strategical [*sic*] reasons, in practice, he may have taught mainly to brahmans, who were probably the most qualified to understand the subtle argumentation of his revival, the most concerned about it, and the most competent to spread it throughout society once converted to his doctrine" (Marcaurelle 2000, 39).²³⁸ His vehemence against śūdras would thus be in keeping with the times, and it is altogether more remarkable that Śaṅkara saw fit to include mention of *any* possibility of śūdras attaining liberation.²³⁹ Given the weighty burden of tradition borne by commentaries on the *prasthāna-trayī*,²⁴⁰ it is much harder to determine from these works what Śaṅkara's position on any given issue really was.

Śaṅkara's *Upadeśa-sāhasrī* is "the only independent, non-commentary work that can be safely ascribed to him" (Śaṅkarācārya 2006, 1:xi). One would hope to gain a clearer assessment of Śaṅkara's position regarding śūdras from this text. In a passage describing the qualifications of a seeker (*mumukṣu*), he states: "The means to final release is knowledge [of Brahman]. It should be repeatedly related to the pupil until it is firmly grasped, if he is ... a brahman who is pure ..., if his caste, profession, behavior, knowledge [of the Veda], family

²³⁸ Others have also made similar observations to explain Śaṅkara's position regarding the ineligibility of śūdras for studying the Vedas: "It must also be remembered that in commenting on the classical texts Śaṅkara is necessarily bound by their plain views and the *Smṛtis* by his time clearly expressed discriminatory views as far as the rights of the Śūdras to Vedic study and ritual were concerned" (Pande 1994, 249). Also, "[Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja] reflect the circumstances of their own times, and they ought not be condemned as discriminatory from the vantage point of our times ... We should bear in mind that equality, whether in Sankara's time, or now, is subject to restriction, though in each age we define the restrictions differently, based upon our current moral presuppositions" (Comans 2000, 317).

²³⁹ Rambachan, however, rightly considers such explanations "mild" and points out that it is "a matter of concern that the greatest historical exponent of this teaching remained untroubled by social inequality, a contradiction that is still not uncommon" (2006, 28).

²⁴⁰ According to Upādhyāya, the conventional meaning of *prasthāna* is 'going' (*gamana*), but in this context, it means the path (*mārga*), by which one may approach Brahman. The three-fold way comprises of 1) *sūtra*, i.e., *BS*; 2) *śruti*, i.e., Upaniṣads; and 3) *smṛti*, i.e., *BhG* (1950, 126).

have been examined.”²⁴¹ These are the only two of the seven requirements enumerated that have to do with caste.²⁴² Thus this text, too, shows Śaṅkara’s conservatism, and excludes the śūdra (and other non-brahmans) from the knowledge of Brahman.²⁴³

Belvalkar suggests “some minor short works ... if admitted as genuine, reveal to us the real psychology of Śaṅkara the man more correctly than some of the Ācārya’s longer and more erudite works” (1929, 217). Fortunately, we have just such a work, a short *stotra* (hymn), *Maniṣā-pañcakam* (MP) “Five Verses of Wisdom,” and we have evidence that Nīścaldās also was familiar with this work. This *stotra* is held to have been spontaneously uttered by Śaṅkara in response to a particular event. In the words of T. M. P. Mahadevan: “One day, in Vārāṇasī, the Ācārya was walking towards the sacred river Gaṅgā, accompanied by his disciples. At a distance he espied an untouchable coming towards him, followed by four ferocious dogs. Addressing the untouchable, the Ācārya said, ‘Go away; go away!’ ” (Śaṅkarācārya and Mahadevan 1967, 1). The untouchable’s reply was in two verses:

*annamayād-annamayam athavā caitanyam eva caitanyāt,
yativara dūrīkartuṃ vāñchasi kim brūhi gaccha gaccheti.*

Tell me, O best of ascetics, by saying “go away, go away,”
what do you wish to distance?
Is it a body made from grains, from [another] body made from grains, or
consciousness from consciousness?

*pratyag-vastuni nistarāṅga-sahajānandāvabodhāmbudhau
vipro ’yaṃ śvapaco ’yam ityapi mahān ko ’yaṃ vibheda-bhramaḥ.
kiṃ gaṅgāmbuni bimbite ’mbaramaṇau cāṇḍāla-vīthīpayāḥ
pure vā ’ntaram asti kañcana-ghaṭī-mṛt-kumbhayor vā ’mbare.*

In the inner essence that is the still ocean of natural happiness,
What is this grand delusion of difference: “this one is a brahman,”
“this one, an eater of dog-meat”?
Is there any difference in the sun’s reflection, be it in the waters of the Ganges or

²⁴¹ *Upadeśa-sāhasrī* 2.1.2: “*tad idaṃ mokṣa-sādhanaṃ jñānam. ... śucaye brāhmaṇāya ... brūyāt punaḥ punar yāvad grahaṇaṃ dṛḍhī-bhavati*” (Śaṅkarācārya 2006, 1:191, 2:211).

²⁴² The other five qualifications are that the pupil must have: 1) dispassion towards everything other than knowledge; 2) abandoned the desires for sons, wealth, etc., and become an ascetic; 3) tranquility, self-control, etc.; 4) the qualities required of a student by scripture; and 5) he must approach the teacher in the prescribed manner (Śaṅkarācārya 2006, 2:90).

²⁴³ However, in *Upadeśa-sāhasrī* 1.5.1, Śaṅkara makes a passing reference to the *MBh* 14.54 episode of the sage Uttāṅka (var. Udaṅka), where the sage has been granted a boon by Kṛṣṇa that he will receive water whenever he thinks of Kṛṣṇa. Travelling through the desert and thirsty, Uttāṅka draws upon this boon, but does not accept water offered in the form of urine by Indra who is in the guise of a *cāṇḍāla* hunter (Śaṅkarācārya 2006, 1:79, 2:114-5n1). Kṛṣṇa goes on to explain that he and Indra were testing Uttāṅka. It is notable that this *MBh* incident is inverting the conventional notions of purity and caste in a test of the brahman caste, which, presumably, fails.

[in] the puddles of water in the streets of the outcastes,²⁴⁴
Or in interior space, be it enclosed by a gold vessel or an earthen pot?²⁴⁵

The canonical collections of Śaṅkara's works²⁴⁶ typically do not include these opening verses spoken by an untouchable (*cāṇḍāla*).²⁴⁷ However, Nīścaldās quotes the second verse of this prologue,²⁴⁸ as *pramāṇa* (proof), in *YP* 10 on the determination of a knower and non-knower [of the self], as support for his statement that one's nature is Brahman-consciousness and unattached (*brahma-caitanya aur asaṅga*). Moreover, Nīścaldās states that the *pramāṇa* is offered by none other than Lord Śiva as a challenge to Śaṅkara (*śaṅkara-svāmī-jī ūpar ākṣepa*) (1914, 55-57).

Hearing these words from the *cāṇḍāla*, Śaṅkara is said to have immediately recognized that the outcaste was none other than Lord Śiva in disguise, and the four dogs, the four Vedas. Śaṅkara then humbly prostrates himself at the *cāṇḍāla*'s feet and states:

*jagrat-svapna-susuptiṣu sphuṭatara yā saṁvid-ujjṛmbhate
yā brahmādi-pipilikānta-tanuṣu protā jagat-sākṣiṇī,
saivahaṁ na ca drsya-vastv-iti dṛḍha-prajñāpi yasyāsti cec
cāṇḍālo 'stu sa tu dvijo 'stu gurur ity eṣā maṇiṣā mama. (MP1)*

The consciousness which is clearly visible in the waking, sleeping and deep sleep
states,
Which is the witness of creation that pervades all beings, from Brahmā down to
an ant,
I am that alone and not the seen object—the one who firmly has such knowledge
Is my guru, be he an outcaste or a twice-born. This is my conclusion.

The same encounter is also described at greater length in the Śaṅkara hagiographies, such as the *Śaṅkara-dig-vijaya (SDV)* 6.25-38 (Mādhava and Upādhyāya 1967, 188-192; Mādhava 1978, 59-61).²⁴⁹ Without going into the remainder of the *MP* verses or the alternate versions in the various Śaṅkara hagiographies, we can clearly see from the excerpts cited that Śaṅkara

²⁴⁴ Recall the similar sentiment expressed by Sundardās in the *sākhī* 30.55 seen earlier in section 3.5, on p. 60.

²⁴⁵ Śaṅkarācārya and Mahadevan (1967, 1-3), my translations.

²⁴⁶ For example, the Samata Books reprint of the Vani Vilas collected works (Śaṅkarācārya 1981a, 2:52-53) or *The Minor works of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya* (Śaṅkarācārya and Bhagavat 1952, 364-5) only give the five verses uttered by Śaṅkara, without the *cāṇḍāla*'s preamble. Pantulu, in his translation of *MP* "with the gloss of Patanjali" does mention these verses. However, he does not mention what the source document is and his translation does not distinguish between the commentary and the core text (1905).

²⁴⁷ A *cāṇḍāla* (var. *caṇḍāla*) is considered to be an outcaste, born of a śūdra father and a brahman mother.

²⁴⁸ In the text, the first and second halves of the verse appear to be swapped.

²⁴⁹ The *SDV* account of the encounter appears to be faithful to the events as described in *MP*, including its preamble. However, the *MP* version is more eloquent and concise.

in the *MP* is advocating transcending caste. According to Bader, “this episode has become one of the best known stories on Śaṅkara’s life. Nowadays in India, the tale is repeatedly cited to demonstrate that Śaṅkara, in bowing down to one of lowly birth, was above ‘casteism’” (2000, 49-50).

This naturally raises the question: can the *MP* be considered an authentic work of Śaṅkara? He is credited by tradition with having written some 400 works (Belvalkar 1929, 217; Pande 1994, 104), all in just a short 32-year lifespan. These works fall into three categories: commentaries; *stotras* (hymns of praise); and *prakaraṇa-granthas* (explicatory treatises). Considering the authorship issue of *MP*, Belvalkar states that “the authorship of Śaṅkarācārya is plausible, but not altogether certain” (1929, 223). H. R. Bhagavat, the editor of *Minor Works of Śaṅkarācārya* (Śaṅkarācārya and Bhagavat 1952) considered *MP* an authentic work and included it in his compilation. Paul Hacker, in his analysis of authorship based on attestations to Śaṅkara as Ācārya, Bhagavat, Bhagavat-pāda or Bhagavat-pūjya-pāda in manuscript colophons, neglects to list the *MP* among the texts he enumerates (1995, 45-48). Gussner (1976) attempts a “stylometric study” of fourteen hymns attributed to Śaṅkara, including the *MP*. On the basis of the occurrence of just one word, *hṛdaya*, in *MP* 4 used to indicate ‘mind’, which is different from Śaṅkara’s usage in the metrical *Upadeśa-sāhasrī* (15.53, 17.31) where *hṛdaya* occurs in the compound *hṛdaya-granthiḥ*, Gussner concludes that Śaṅkara is most likely not the author of the *MP*. But the latter two instances are quoting *MuU* 2.2.8²⁵⁰ and do not quite reveal how Śaṅkara would otherwise use the term, so Gussner’s argument is weak, at least concerning the authorship of the *MP*.²⁵¹ Potter does not draw any definite conclusions as to Śaṅkara’s authorship of the *MP*, but he does list it as one of the 66 works of Śaṅkara in his Bibliography of the *EIP* (1995, 284-5).

Baldev Upādhyāya, in his Hindi work *Śrī Śaṅkarācārya*, considers 64 hymns (*stotra*) attributed to Śaṅkara that are included in the Vāṇī Vilās collection of Śaṅkara’s works. These *stotras* are classified as hymns to Ganeśa, Śiva, goddesses (*devī*), Viṣṇu, deity pairs (*yugal-devatā*), rivers and pilgrimage sites, and miscellaneous (*sādhāraṇa*). He writes that there are over 240 hymns (*stotra*), in either manuscript or printed form, associated with Śaṅkara, of

²⁵⁰ *MuU* 2.2.8: “bhidyate hṛdaya-granthiś chidyante sarva-saṁśayāḥ, kṣīyante cāsya karmāṇi tasmin drṣṭe prāvare. When it (Brahman) is seen in the high and the low, the knot of one’s heart is cut, all doubts are dispelled and one’s karmas are exhausted.”

²⁵¹ For a more general critique of Gussner’s methodology, see Pande (1994, 123-9)

which most are contrived (*kr̥trima*) and have no associated commentaries (*vyākhyā*) by ancient teachers (*prācīna ācārya*). Thus, they should be considered the works of other Śāṅkarācāryas (1950, 133-37). On the basis of a *ṭīkā* by Sadāśivendra²⁵² and the *Madhūmañjarī-vyākhyā* of Gopālabāla,²⁵³ Upādhyāya considers the *MP* to be a genuine work (137). However, according to the dates for these commentators given in Thangaswami (1980) (fifteenth-sixteenth century for Gopālabāla and eighteenth century for Sadāśivendra),²⁵⁴ they are not as ancient (*prācīna*) as Upādhyāya would like. Nevertheless, there is sufficient scholarly consensus among Belvalkar (1929), Upādhyāya (1950), Bhagavat (1952), Mahadevan (1967) and G. C. Pande (1994)²⁵⁵ to accept that the *MP* is a genuine work of Śāṅkara. As a result, the representation of caste transcendence that it contains can be considered a clearer reflection of Śāṅkara's true position, unencumbered by extraneous concerns of attempting not to alienate the brahmanical orthodoxy. Such a stance is perfectly in keeping with what has been referred to as Śāṅkara's "social innovations, his intransigent stand against the necessity of ritual and social duty, his insistence on complete *sannyāsa*, on giving up all marks of caste or distinction, this despite the fact that he was a brahman by birth and his pupils were brahmins" (Ingalls 1952, 13).

The case for the *MP* being a genuine work of Śāṅkara can be further strengthened by similar appeals for caste transcendence from other works universally acknowledged to be genuine works of Śāṅkara. These are his *bhāṣyas* on the *prasthāna-trayī*, namely the *BS*, *BhG*,²⁵⁶ and the ten principal Upaniṣads (Īśā, Kena, Kaṭha, Praśna, Muṇḍaka, Māṇḍūkya, Taittirīya, Aitareya, Chāndogya and Bṛhadāraṇyaka) (Pande 1994, 107; Hacker 1995, 50; Belvalkar 1929, 218). I will present excerpts from Śāṅkara's *bhāṣyas* on the *BhG*, *BU* and

²⁵² Thangaswami (1980, 132, 218, 301) lists a *Maniṣāpāñcaka-tātparyadīpikā* by Sadāśivabrahma or Sadāśivabrahmendra Sarasvatī (1700-1800 CE).

²⁵³ Mahadevan also refers to the *Madhūmañjarī*, which he ascribes to Bālagopālendramuni (Śāṅkarācārya and Mahadevan 1967, 9). Thangaswami (1980, 335-6, 366) gives the *Madhūmañjarī* author's name as Gopālabālayati (1500-1600 CE) and also Bālagopālendrayati (1475-1575 CE).

²⁵⁴ See nn. 252, 253 above for specific references in Thangaswami.

²⁵⁵ Regarding *MP*, Pande doesn't add any new information to what has already been presented, but he appears to implicitly concur with the inclusion of *MP* to the Śāṅkara corpus (122-29), and he mentions the text in the context of discussing Śāṅkara's attitude towards caste discrimination as an example of Śāṅkara's changed attitude while wondering if the story is "history or mere legend." Yet, for him, "[t]he very fact that [this episode of Śāṅkara's meeting a *cāṇḍāla*] was accepted even as part of the Śāṅkara legend is not without significance" (250).

²⁵⁶ There is some controversy over ascription of the *BhG bhāṣya* to Śāṅkara (Potter 1981, 294-5). I follow W. R. Antarkar who concludes that "Śāṅkarācārya's authorship of the [*BhG bhāṣya*], therefore, stands proved and the proof rests on very strong evidence" (1962, 26), and also Mayeda who has "found no strong evidence, internal or external, to deny the authenticity of the [*BhG bhāṣya*] as Ś[āṅkara]'s production" (1965, 197).

TU, whose ascription to Śaṅkara is not in any doubt whatsoever. Ānandagiri (1260-1320 CE) wrote *ītkās* on all three works (as well as other works of Śaṅkara) and there also exist *vārtikās* on the latter two by Sureśvara, his immediate disciple.²⁵⁷

In *BhG* 9.32, Kṛṣṇa states, “Even those of low births (*pāpa-yonayaḥ*), be they women, vaiśyas, and even śūdras, whoever take refuge in Me, O Pārtha, they also attain the highest goal.”²⁵⁸ Here śūdras are clearly and unambiguously enumerated among those who are not excluded from the “highest goal,” and, if Śaṅkara truly subscribed to the anti-śūdra rhetoric he espoused in the context of *BS* 1.3.34-38, his commentary to this *BhG* verse would give him an opportunity to restate his position and engage in fancy footwork to explain why Kṛṣṇa is not excluding them here. Instead we see Śaṅkara simply restating the content of the verse without any protest whatsoever: “those low births, women, vaiśyas and śūdras, they too attain the highest goal.”²⁵⁹

With regard to the *BU ŚBh*, Potter writes, “there is no reason to doubt Śaṅkara’s authorship of this commentary” (1981, 180). More importantly, for our purposes, “Śaṅkara’s *Brhadāranyakopaniṣad-bhāṣya* is a far more original piece of writing than his *Brahma-sūtra-bhāṣya* and might be expected to contain views at odds with tradition. In commenting on the *Brahma-sūtra* Śaṅkara is very careful not to depart from tradition. On the other hand, in commenting on the *Brhadāranyaka* it appears to be his intention to break with tradition” (Ingalls 1954, 295). In the very second sentence of the introduction to his *bhāṣya* to *BU*, Śaṅkara plainly states, “This little commentary [on the *BU*] is being commenced for those desirous of turning away from *saṃsāra*, in order to explain the knowledge of the identity of *ātmā* with Brahman as a means for removing the cause of *saṃsāra*.”²⁶⁰ There is no mention

²⁵⁷ I thus stay clear of works where the authorship is debated. Śaṅkara’s authorship of the *bhāṣyas* on *Kenopaniṣad* and the *Māṇḍūkya Kārikās* is not without controversy. For *Kena*, see Mayeda (1967), Pande (1994, 107), for the *Māṇḍūkya Kārikās*, see Mayeda (1967-68).

²⁵⁸ *māṃ hi pārtha vyapāsṛitya ye ’pi syuḥ pāpayonayaḥ, striyo vaiśyās tathā śūdrās te ’pi yānti parām gatim.*

²⁵⁹ *BhG ŚBh* 9.32: ... *pāpa-yonayaḥ pāpā yonir yeṣāṃ te pāpa-yonayaḥ pāpa-janmānaḥ. ke te ? ity āha -striyo vaiśyās tathā śūdrās te ’pi yānti gacchanti parām prakṛṣṭām gatim.* We do see evidence of Śaṅkara’s conservatism in *BhG ŚBh* 18.41. The *BhG śloka* is “*brāhmaṇa-kṣatriya-viśāṃ śūdrāṇāṃ ca parantapa, karmāṇi pravibhaktāni svabhāva-prabhavair gunāiḥ. O Arjuna, the acts of the brahmans, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas and śūdras have been distributed according to the strength of their nature and guṇas.*” Here, Śaṅkara comments that the śūdras are not included in the compound with the other three castes on account of their ineligibility to study the Vedas: *śūdrāṇāṃ asamāsa-karaṇaṃ eka-jatitve sati vedānadhikaraṇāt.* It is telling that Śaṅkara chose to explicitly draw attention to this, he could just as easily have explained it as *metri causa*, for the sake of the meter.

²⁶⁰ *tasyā iyaṃ alpa-granthā vṛttir ārabhyate saṃsāra-vyāvivṛtsubhyaḥ saṃsāra-hetu-nivṛtti-sādhana-brahmātmaikatva-vidyā-pratipattaye.* (Śaṅkarācārya, Ānandagiri, and Vidyāraṇya 1986, 1)

whatsoever of caste eligibility of the seeker.²⁶¹ Commenting on *BU* 1.4.16, Śaṅkara suggests that the performance of Vedic rituals puts one in a relationship with the gods similar to that of the livestock to their owner. He goes on to ask, “if, on knowing Brahman, one is freed from the duties that are bondage, [duties] that make one [act] like an animal, on what account is one made to take on the privileges (*adhikāra*) of the bondage of action, as though powerless, and not instead [take up] the claim (*adhikāra*) to knowledge which is the means to freedom from that [bondage of action]?”²⁶² Śaṅkara is clearly de-emphasizing and devaluing the *karma-kāṇḍa* (ritualistic) portions of the Vedas and, by implication, the attendant preoccupation with caste. Elsewhere, while commenting on *BU* 4.4.8, Śaṅkara alludes to the portion of *BU* 1.4.10 beginning with, “And whoever among the gods realized It [Brahman], they alone became That [Brahman]; Likewise among the seers and among humans.”²⁶³ He then adds, “because *śruti* states that [the knowledge of Brahman is for *everyone*]” (emphasis mine).²⁶⁴ Once again, caste is no bar. His definitive statement occurs in the *bhāṣya* summation of *BU* 2.4.5 and the preamble to 2.4.6: “The different castes such as brahman, kṣatriya, etc., that are caused by one’s karma, and the stages of life (*āśrama*) and other attributes that are objects of notions superimposed on the *ātmā* due to ignorance, like the notion of the snake on the rope, in order to destroy these notions [of caste, etc.], it is stated ‘All this indeed becomes known, dear Maitreyi, when the *ātmā* is seen, heard, and reflected [upon].’”²⁶⁵ Knowledge of *ātmā* and Brahman destroys the false notions of caste, says Śaṅkara here.

In the *bhāṣya* on *TU* 1.12.1, in response to the objection that knowledge occurs only through karma and that listening to the Upaniṣads is futile, Śaṅkara says, “No, there is no

²⁶¹ Sureśvara’s *Sambandha-vārtika*, his metrical introduction to *BU ŚBh* also echoes the same sentiment in vv. 292-93: “[Rites such as] the *Agnihotra*, etc., even when performed by a śūdra, who is ineligible, are fruitless. Therefore, it [eligibility] is carefully defined. But here nothing more is required from the Śāstras than the human goal, which is the destruction of ignorance dependent only on the arising of knowledge. *kāminā’py adnihotrādi śūdreṇānadhikāriṇā; kṛtam apy aphalaṃ tena yatnāt tatra nirūpyate. avidyā-gha-smara-jñāna-janma-mātrāvalambinaḥ; pum-arthasyādhikāṃ śāstrāt kiṃcid atra tu nārthyate*” (Sureśvara and Venkataramana Aiyar 1905, 46; Sureśvara and Mahadevan 1972, 147-8). Liberation is simply a human goal, and is not proscribed by one’s caste.

²⁶² *brahma vidvāṃś cet tasmāt paśu-bhāvāt kartavyatā-bandhana-rūpāt pratimucyate. kenāyaṃ kārītāḥ karma-bandhanādhikāre’vaśa iva pravartate, na punas tad vimokṣaṇopāye vidyādhikāra iti?* (Śaṅkarācārya, Ānandagiri, and Vidyāraṇya 1986, 112)

²⁶³ *tad yo devānāṃ pratyabudhata sa eva tad abhavat. tatharṣiṇām. tathā manuṣyāṇām.* (*BU* 1.4.10).

²⁶⁴ “*tad yo devānām*” *iti sarvārthśruteḥ* (Śaṅkarācārya, Ānandagiri, and Vidyāraṇya 1986, 363)

²⁶⁵ *yad brahma-kṣatrādi-karma-nimittāṃ varnāśramādi-lakṣaṇam ātmany avidyādyāropita-pratyaya-viśayaṃ rajjvām iva sarpa-pratyayas tad upamardanārtham āha, “ātmani khalv are maitreyi dṛṣṭe śrute vijñāta idaṃ sarvaṃ viditāṃ bhavati”* (Śaṅkarācārya, Ānandagiri, and Vidyāraṇya 1986, 193).

such rule [that knowledge occurs through karma alone]. Nor does knowledge arise only through the removal of obstacles and not²⁶⁶ through the grace of Īśvara, the practices of austerity, meditation, etc. Because non-violence, celibacy, etc., facilitate knowledge and listening, reflection and meditation are the direct causes [of knowledge]. Thus, it is established that there are other *āśramas*, that everyone has a right (*adhikāra*) to knowledge, and that the highest good is only by way of knowledge.”²⁶⁷ Here too, Śaṅkara refutes Vedic karma as a means to knowledge, ignores caste, and proclaims that everyone has a right to the knowledge of liberation. Thus, we can conclude that Nīścaldās, when he cited Śaṅkara in defense of his views on the eligibility of śūdras to liberation, was being faithful to Śaṅkara’s broader intent, and was not trying to misrepresent his stance to further his own caste transcendence agenda.

4.5 Caste in the Mahābhārata

Śaṅkara’s position certainly appears radical in the context of the Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā view of his times, but that does not appear to present an obstacle for him. His views, however, are not without precedent: in the *Anuśāsana-parvan* (MBh 13.131), in the dialog between Umā and Maheśvara (Śiva) on the four castes (*varṇa*), Śiva says:

*etaiḥ karma-phalair devi nyūna-jāti-kulodbhavaḥ
śūdro ’py āgama-saṁpanno dvijo bhavati saṁskṛtaḥ* (v. 45).

By the result of these actions,²⁶⁸ O goddess, a person born to a family of a low caste, even a śūdra, becomes a sanctified twice-born (*dvija*) endowed with [Vedic] knowledge (*āgama*).

*brāhmaṇo vāpy asad-vṛttaḥ sarva-saṁkara-bhojanaḥ
brāhmaṇyaṁ puṇyam utsrjya śūdro bhavati tādrśaḥ* (v. 46).

Whereas even a *brāhmaṇa* who is of vile conduct and observes no distinction with regard to food,
Such a person gives up the merit of *brāhmaṇa*-hood and becomes a śūdra.

²⁶⁶ Yes, this is an awkward double negative, faithful to how Śaṅkara renders it in Sanskrit.

²⁶⁷ *na, niyamābhāvāt. na hi pratibandha-kṣayād eva vidyotpadyate na tv īśvara-prasāda-tapo-dhyānādy-anuṣṭhānād iti niyamo ’sti. ahiṁsā-brahmacaryādinām ca vidyāṁ pratyupkarakatvāt sākṣād eva ca kāraṇatvāc chravaṇa-manana-nididhyāsanānām. ataḥ siddhāny āśramāntrāṇi sarveṣāṁ cādhikāro vidyāyāṁ paraṁ ca śreyaḥ kevalāyā vidyāyā eveti siddham* (Śaṅkara and Ānandagiri 1979, 438).

²⁶⁸ Enumerated in vv. 27-44 of this section (MBh *Anuśāsana-parvan*, Ch. 131). These actions are said to result in upward mobility from one *varṇa* to the next, but only in the subsequent birth.

*karmabhiḥ śucibhir devi śuddhātmā vijitendriyaḥ
śūdro 'pi dvijavat sevyā iti brahmābravīt svayam* (v. 47).

Even a śūdra, O goddess, who has purified his *ātmā* by pure deeds and has
conquered all his senses,
Is to be honored like a twice-born; so said Brahmā himself.

*Svabhāva-karma ca śubham yatra śūdre 'pi tiṣṭhati
viśuddhaḥ sa dvijātir vai vijñeya iti me matiḥ* (v. 48).

Where natural deeds and virtue are present in even a śūdra,
He should indeed be considered a pure twice-born; this is my opinion.

*na yonir nāpi saṃskāro na śrutam na ca saṃnatih
kāraṇāni dvijatvasya vṛttam eva tu kāraṇam* (v. 49).

Neither birth, nor the purificatory rites, nor learning, nor humility
Are reasons for [conferring] the twice-born status. Conduct alone is the reason.

*sarvo 'yam brāhmaṇo loke vṛttena tu vidhīyate
vṛtte sthitaś ca suśroṇi brāhmaṇatvaṃ nigacchati* (v. 50).

All *brāhmaṇas* in this world are accounted for by conduct.
One who is established in good conduct, O one with beautiful hips,
attains the status of a *brāhmaṇa*.

*brāhmaḥ svabhāvaḥ kalyāṇi samaḥ sarvatra me matiḥ
nirguṇam nirmalaṃ brahma yatra tiṣṭhati sa dvijaḥ* (v. 51).

The nature of Brahman, O auspicious one, is equal everywhere, in my opinion.
The one in whom the attribute-less, unsullied Brahman resides, is a twice-born.

According to none other than Lord Śiva, in the *MBh*, *anyone* with pure deeds, good conduct and virtue, *even a* śūdra, is to be considered a twice-born, not just those belonging to brahman, kṣatriya or vaiśya castes. In fact, a brahman is determined, not by birth, but by conduct.

Though Nīścaldās is thought to have written a gloss (*ṭippaṇī*) on the *MBh*, it is no longer extant (Siṃha 1981, 28), thus we do not know if he was aware of the above dialog between Śiva and Pārvati. But this is not an isolated instance in the *MBh* where caste is not considered

to be hereditary²⁶⁹. Both Śaṅkara and Nīscaldās are aware²⁷⁰ of *MBh* 12.314.45 from the *Śānti-parvan* (Book of Peace), where Vyāsa, the author of the *MBh* blesses his five students Sumantu, Vaiśampāyana, Jaimini, Paila, and his own son, Śuka, saying:

sarvas taratu durgāṇi sarvo bhadraṇi paśyatu
śrāvayec caturo varṇān kṛtvā brāhmaṇam agrataḥ (v. 45).

May all overcome difficulties, may all experience good fortune;
One should teach [the Vedas to]²⁷¹ all four castes, putting a brahman first.

Let us take a closer look at the context of this verse. In *MBh* 12.313, Śuka receives final teachings on liberation from King Janaka. In 12.314, he returns to his father Vyāsa's *āśrama*, situated ten *yojanas*²⁷² from where Śiva had undergone the most austere penance (*tapo'tapyata durdharṣas*) for a thousand heavenly years (*divyaṃ varṣa-sahasraṃ*). Vyāsa continued to teach the Vedas to his disciples and his son. One day, his disciples asked Vyāsa for a boon:

śaṣṭhaḥ śiṣyo na te khyātiṃ gacched atra prasīda naḥ (v. 37cd).
catvāras te vayaṃ śiṣyā guruputraś ca pañcamah
iha vedāḥ pratiṣṭherann eṣa naḥ kāṅkṣito varaḥ (v. 38).

If you might favor us here, may no sixth disciple of yours attain fame.
We four are your disciples, and [your] son is the fifth;
May the [five] Vedas²⁷³ prosper here – this is our desired boon.

²⁶⁹ In the *Vana/Āraṇya[ka]-parvan* (*MBh* 3.177), in the dialog between the serpent Nahuṣa and Yudhiṣṭhira, Yudhiṣṭhira unequivocally states that even a śūdra, if possessed of the virtues of truth, charity, freedom from anger, compassion (*ānṛśaṃsya*), non-violence, tenderness (*ghṛṇā*), is not a śūdra, and a brahman without these virtues is not a brahman (3.177.20). The sages consider one's moral conduct (*śīla*) as primary (28), etc. In the same *parvan*, there also occurs the *Vyādha-gītā*, *MBh* 3.197-202 (Calcutta ed. 3.205-16), where a śūdra hunter/butcher named Dharmavyādha instructs an arrogant brahman named Kauśika regarding *dharma*. [For more on the *Vyādha-gītā*, see n. 229, p. 106]. E. W. Hopkins (1895, 425n3) also refers to a *MBh* verse 12.319.87 (*Śānti-parvan*) "Let him get instruction even from a Śūdra if he can thereby attain to salvation, *prāpya jñānam ... śūdrād api*," but this is not found in the Pune Critical Edition, not even in the Supplementary Passages. It is unclear which *MBh* edition Hopkins was referring to, but it could be the (problematic) Calcutta Edition, since he lists Pratap Chandra Roy's translation as one of his sources for the epic (500). Then there also is the case of the sage Uttanka, who is offered water in the form of urine by a *cāṇḍāla* (*MBh* 14.54), mentioned earlier in n. 243, p. 96.

²⁷⁰ As we have seen earlier (Nīscaldās on page 97, and Śaṅkara on page 98).

²⁷¹ This parenthetical edit will be justified shortly.

²⁷² A *yojana* is a unit of measure considered to be either 4, 5, 8 or 9 miles long, with no consensus among scholars. The astronomer Āryabhaṭṭa (500 CE) & the *Sūrya Siddhānta* considered it equivalent to 5 miles, while the astronomer Paramēśvara (fifteenth c.) took it to be more than one and a half times larger (Thompson 1997, 195; Paramēśvara 1916, 4, v. 30).

²⁷³ The *MBh* is referred to as the 'fifth Veda,' which is supported by *CU* 7.1.4: "*itihāsa-purāṇaḥ pañcamo vedānām vedah....*" For more details specific to the *MBh*, see Fitzgerald (1985).

In response Vyāsa said:

*brāhmaṇāya sadā deyaṃ brahma śuśrūṣave bhavet
brahmaloke nivāsaṃ yo dhruvaṃ samabhikāṅkṣati* (v. 40).

The Vedas should always be given to a brahman,
to one who is desirous of learning the Vedas,
Who desires a secure dwelling in the world of Brahmā.

*bhavanto bahulāḥ santu vedo vistāryatām ayam
nāśiṣye saṃpradātavyo nāvrate nākṛtātmani* (v. 41).

May you all multiply, may this Veda spread [through your efforts].
The Vedas are not to be imparted
to one who has not formally become a disciple,
nor to one who is not observant of religious rites,
nor to one who is not identified with the *ātmā*.

*ete śiṣya-guṇāḥ sarve vijñātavyā yathārthataḥ
nāparīkṣita-cāritre vidyā deyā kathaṃ cana* (v. 42).

These are to be known as the proper qualifications for discipleship,
Knowledge should be not imparted to anyone without testing their character.

*yathā hi kanakaṃ śuddhaṃ tāpa-cchedani-gharṣaṇaiḥ
parīkṣeta tathā śiṣyān īkṣet kula-guṇādibhiḥ* (v. 43).

Just as pure gold is tested by heat, cutting and rubbing,
Similarly disciples should be viewed by their family, attributes, etc.

*na niyojyās ca vaḥ śiṣyā aniyoge mahābhave
yathāmati yathāpāṭhaṃ tathā vidyā phaliṣyati* (v. 44).

Never set your disciples to tasks to which are unfit, or are fraught with danger.
One's knowledge will bear fruit commensurate with one's understanding and study.

The rules for selecting a disciple contain no mention of caste, unless one reads the reference to family (*kula*) in v. 43 as an indirect allusion. In fact, v. 40 seems to make the study of the Vedas eligible for *anyone* “who is desirous of learning the Vedas (*brahma śuśrūṣave bhavet*).” This would be consistent with Śiva’s words in the *Anuśāsana-parvan*, MBh 13.131.45-51, that anyone with good conduct (*vṛtte sthithaḥ*) is to be considered equal to a

brahman.²⁷⁴ In the context of the topic of this section (*MBh* 13.314.40-44), namely, the eligibility of one to become a disciple and study the Vedas, it becomes clear that the much cited *pāda* 13.314.45c, “One should teach all four castes, *śrāvayec caturo varṇān*,” is referring to the teaching of the Vedas, including the *Mahābhārata*, to all four castes. The narrowing of the materials suitable for study by women and śūdras to just the *itihāsa* and *purāṇas*, as suggested by Śaṅkara in *BS ŚBh* 1.3.38 and also by Nīscaldās, is not apparent here.

After enjoining his five disciples to teach the four *varṇas*, Vyāsa concludes this chapter with the following verses, leaving no doubt that the Vedas are intended as suitable material for teaching:

*vedasyādhyayanam hīdaṃ tac ca kāryam mahat smṛtam
stutyartham iha devānāṃ vedāḥ sṛṣṭāḥ svayaṃbhuvā* (v. 46).

This is the study of the Vedas, and it is considered an important task.
The Vedas were created by the self-born [Brahmā] for the purpose of
praising the deities here.

*yo nirvadeta saṃmohād brāhmaṇam vedapāragam
so 'padhyānād brāhmaṇasya parābhūyād asaṃśayam* (v. 47).

One who, due to confusion, may speak ill of a brahman who has mastered the Vedas,
Shall doubtless perish due to [his] jealousy of the brahman.

*yaś cādharmaṇa vibrūyād yaś cādharmaṇa pṛcchati
tayoṛ anyataraḥ praiti vidveṣaṃ vādhigacchati* (v. 48).

One who unjustly teaches and one who unjustly questions,
Either of them dies or attracts hatred.

*etad vaḥ sarvam ākhyātaṃ svādhyāyasya vidhiṃ prati
upakuryāc ca śiṣyāṇāṃ etac ca hṛdi vo bhavet* (v. 49).

You all have been told everything regarding the way of studying [the Vedas].
May you bear [all] this in mind and help your disciples succeed.

These selections from the *MBh* illustrate what Matilal calls ‘internal criticism’ “within the tradition about the prevalence of the heredity-based caste hierarchy” (2002, 142). Even in

²⁷⁴ A similar view is also expressed by Yudhiṣṭhira in the *Āraṇyaka-parvan*, *MBh* 3.177, see n. 269 above.

the *Bhagavad Gītā*, there is no explicit mention of heredity in connection with the *varṇa*, caste system. In *BhG* 4.13ab, Kṛṣṇa only states that the four *varṇas* were created by him in accordance with the distribution of karma and the *guṇas*,²⁷⁵ a point which is further elaborated in *BhG* 18.41-45. It is Śaṅkara who ties this to heredity via his commentary to *BhG* 18.47, by quoting *Gau. Dh. Sū.* 11.29, “[Members of] the castes and stages of life (*āśrama*), who always live according to their karma, enjoy the rewards of their works after death, and by virtue of the remnant (of their karma) they are born again in specific places, castes, and families, (endowed) with *dharma*, long life, learning in the Vedas, virtuous conduct, wealth, happiness, and wisdom.”²⁷⁶ As discussed in the context of *BS ŚBh* 1.3.34-38 in section 4.4 above, this may have been motivated by Śaṅkara’s calculated, political attempt to not alienate the orthodoxy. Also, Kṛṣṇa himself in *BhG* 9.32 allows that even women and *śūdras* can attain the “highest goal,” a statement that demands an explanation. However, as mentioned in section 4.4 of this chapter, Śaṅkara’s views elsewhere are considerably more radical and advocate the irreconcilability of caste with the Advaita stance, and it is plausible that he was not only aware of the *MBh* criticism of caste heredity but also sympathetic to it. In other works such as his *bhāṣya* to the *BU* and *TU*, as well as the *MP*, he makes the case that everyone, regardless of caste, is eligible for knowledge of liberation. Similar caste-leveling sentiments appear in the work of Sureśvara, one of his four immediate disciples. In his *Naiṣkarmya-siddhi*, Sureśvara states, “The very witness of the intellect of a *caṇḍāla* (an outcaste) is the witness of Brahmā’s intellect; the one [consciousness] illumines both, but appears as though many because of the difference among what is illumined” (2.88).²⁷⁷ In his introduction to his commentary on the *BU*, the *Sambandha-vārtika*, Sureśvara again maintains that a *śūdra* is eligible for liberation even if he is ineligible for heaven as a result of his ineligibility to perform Vedic rites such as the *agnihotra*.²⁷⁸ Niścaldās too, as was evident

²⁷⁵ *BhG* 4.13ab: *cātur-varṇyam mayā sṛṣṭaṃ guṇa-karma-vibhāgaśaḥ*.

²⁷⁶ *Gau. Dh. Sū.* 11.29 (=2.2.29): *varṇā āśramāś ca sva-karma-niṣṭhāḥ pretya karma-phalam anubhūya tataḥ śeṣeṇa viśiṣṭa-deśa-jāti-kula-dharmāyūḥ-śruta-vṛtta-vitta-sukha-medhasaḥ janma pratipadyante* (Krishna Warriar 1983, 589). Var. (in boldface): *varṇā āśramāḥ sva-sva-dharma-niṣṭhāḥ pretya karma-phalam anubhūya tataḥ śeṣeṇa viśiṣṭa-deśa-jāti-kula-rūpāyūḥ-śruta-citra-(vṛtta)-vitta-sukha-medhaso janma pratipadyante* (Gautama, Haradatta, and Āpte 1931, 87-8; Gautama, Haradatta, and Paṇḍeya 1966, 115-6)

²⁷⁷ *Naiṣ* 2.88: *caṇḍāla-buddher yad draṣṭṛ tad eva brahma-buddhi-dṛk, ekaṃ tad ubbhayor jyotir bhasya-bhedād anekavat* (Raghavachar 1965, 77; Balasubramanian 1988, 187-8).

²⁷⁸ *Sambandha-vārtika* 292-3: “*kāminā ’py agnihotrādi śūdreṇānadhikāriṇā, kṛtam apy aphalaṃ tena yatnāt tatra nirūpyate. avidyāghas-mara-jñāna-janma-mātrāvalambinaḥ, pumarthasyādhikam śāstrāt kiṃcid atra tu nārthyate*. The *agnihotra* and other rites do not bear fruit when performed by a *śūdra*, who is ineligible [to perform such rites], even though he is desirous

in connection with *VP* 8.111, allows that any human being is eligible for Brahman-realization, but in connection with *śūdras*, he appears to follow Śaṅkara's compromising stance re. *BhG* 4.13ab and allows that their eligibility is "due to actions of prior lives."

Thus, by choosing to write in the vernacular, Niścaldās is hardly unique; he is tapping into a long tradition of criticism of the hereditary caste stratification, which is never far from the surface, as the selections from the *MBh* in this section have shown. Such sentiments are also prevalent in Advaita Vedānta, with its ultimate (*pāramārthika*) standpoint of absolute non-duality, and also in the *nirguṇī sant* tradition of Kabir, Dādū and others. Even in Niścaldās's time, Hindu orthodoxy was being boldly challenged on many fronts. Raja Rammohun Roy (1772-1833) argued for a rationalist interpretation of the Vedas. He rejected idolatry, priests and their rituals, the custom of *satī* (self-immolation of a Hindu widow on her husband's funeral pyre), and the prohibition of access to education and scriptural knowledge on the basis of gender and caste. The Brahmo Samāj started by Roy in 1828 went on to influence many other Indian reformers and movements of that century, most notably Vivekananda and the Ramakrishna Mission (Jones, K. W 1989, 30-33, 41-6; Pankratz 1981, 165-72; Lavan 1981). The rationalist, monotheistic Vedic Hinduism of Dayananda Saraswati (1824-83) also rejected the idolatry, deities, polytheism, priestly privilege, non-Vedic rituals, the *Purāṇas*, and popular Hinduism in general. The Ārya Samāj founded by him in 1875 grew to be a major pan-Indian force for social and political change (Jones, K. W. 1981). In Maharashtra, Jyotirao Phule (1827-90) rejected the brahmanical religion and caste structure altogether and strove to bring about a sociological and cultural revolution promoting egalitarianism, non-exploitation and non-Aryans (Omvedt 1971; O'Hanlon 1985). In Benares, from 1869 onwards, Bhāratendu Hariścandra (1850-85), through his publications and the Kāśī Dharma Sabhā and the Tādīya Samāj, was working to define a nationalistic Hinduism, essentially a monotheistic and Vaishnava version in which bhakti and image-worship were central, replacing the Vedic canon, rituals and sacerdotal structure with the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, the *BhG*, Brajbhāṣā devotional and hagiographical literature and the all-important guru. This religion was pitched as the one true *dharma*, almost about to disappear

of the result (i.e., heaven) as such eligibility is carefully stated. But here nothing more is desired from the *śāstra*, scriptures, than the human goal which is only dependent on the arising of the knowledge which destroys ignorance" (Sureśvara, Ānandagiri, et al. 1937, 103; Sureśvara and Aiyar 1905, 46; Sureśvara and Mahadevan 1972, 147).

due to the pettiness of the brahmanical tradition but graciously rescued by monotheistic teachers; it attempted to include the Brahmo and Ārya Samāj followers too (Dalmia 1997). Even among groups where the validity of the Vedas was accepted, questions were being raised as to their relationship to other sources of authority, textual as well as non-textual, such as the founders of the tradition and their lineages; an example of this occurs in the debates in the court of Mahārājā Rām Singh II of Jaipur (r. 1851-80) between the Vaishnava followers of Nimbārka and Vallabha on the one side with the Smārta-śaivas on the other (Clémentin-Ojha 2001). Thus criticisms of and challenges to the orthodox views on caste were never entirely suppressed and continued to arise throughout the intervening millennia after the composition or compilation of the *MBh*. Challenges to the orthodoxy were certainly part of the zeitgeist around Niścaldās. While it is not possible to adduce from his works the direct or indirect influence on Niścaldās of such currents prevalent in the nation during his time, Niścaldās certainly did not hesitate to question the orthodoxy where it conflicted with his vision of Advaita.

4.6 Niścaldās's Stance on Caste Compared to the Dādū Panth

The previous chapter, particularly section 3.6, “An Evaluation of the Views of Dādū, Rajjab and Sundardās on Religion and Caste,” presented the manner in which the writings of Dādū and his immediate followers advocated the transcendence of religious categorization as Hindu, Muslim, etc., as well as of caste. This is not surprising when one considers that Dādū, Rajjab and Sundardās were self-professed devotees of *nirguṇa*, *pūrṇa* Brahman – the unqualified, attribute-less, indivisible and non-dual God – any attachment to categories and sub-divisions of humanity would be in conflict with their vision. Similar sentiments were expressed by Niścaldās with regard to caste; Niścaldās is highly critical of the orthodox practice of restricting access to teachings on liberation to only the three “twice-born” castes, namely, brahmans, kṣatriyas, and vaiśyas. He holds the position that *everyone*, regardless of caste, is eligible for liberation. But he does not make a complete break with orthodoxy by advocating the eligibility of śūdras for studying Vedic texts too. Rather, he conforms to the orthodox view which permits the śūdras to study liberation as long as it is via listening to non-Vedic texts such as the *itihāsa* and *purāṇas*. But Niścaldās subverts the orthodoxy by including vernacular texts such as the ones he is writing about Vedānta, i.e., Upaniṣadic

(meaning Vedic) matters, among the texts that can provide śūdras liberation! He is unequivocal that any human being, even śūdras and the lowest caste (*antya-jāti*), can attain Brahman-realization.

There is, however, one significant difference between Nīścaldās and the early Dādūpanthīs: The message of Dādū and his early followers was rooted in the *nirguṇī sant* tradition that can be traced back to Kabir in the fifteenth century, and was subscribed to by both Hindus and Muslims. Nīścaldās's message is solidly grounded in the Advaita tradition. While one can justifiably argue that there is no conflict between the non-duality of the *sant* tradition and that of Advaita, the inescapable fact remains that Advaita is staunchly rooted in Hinduism. There is not one mention of Muslims in any of the three published books of Nīścaldās, namely, *YP*, *VS* and *VP*. The trend of Hinduization of the Dādū Panth begun by Sundardās which was alluded to by Orr earlier (1947, 195) is well and truly complete by Nīścaldās's time. It is as though, for Nīścaldās, there is no world outside of the Hindu world.

4.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter began with Pollock's remarks on vernacularization, which he describes as a deliberate choice to create vernacular texts modeled on those of a "superordinate literary culture" and a cosmopolitan language such as Sanskrit, in languages that "do not travel," electing instead to "remain within a limited world." Such a choice is influenced by cultural and political factors, and potentially by nationalizing and colonizing forces as well. In the case of Swāmī Nīścaldās, there are two superordinate literary cultures influencing his works: the Sanskrit philosophical tradition with its vast body of literature spanning millennia, and the Dādūpanthī culture with its tradition of writing in vernacular Hindi since the sixteenth century. In contrast to Pollock's characterization, rather than choosing to remain in a "limited world," Nīścaldās chose to write in the vernacular for exactly the opposite purpose: to make his works more widely accessible than if they had been in Sanskrit. Instead of "not traveling," his *VS* is widely available and almost pan-Indian, with translations available in most of the major national languages, including Sanskrit.

While it may appear that Nīścaldās ignores colonialism and nationalism, he certainly engages with issues of culture and power, possibly motivated by his patron, the ruler of Būndī, and also by his own experience of discrimination and hardships due to his *jāti* when

attempting to acquire a Sanskrit education. His writings clearly reflect a deliberate decision to write in the vernacular in order to make the knowledge of liberation available to all, irrespective of caste. His decision to write in Hindi may have also been influenced by the then prevalent “winds of vernacularization” and “new intellectualism” and historicist perspectives that began to arise in literary works, starting in the sixteenth century. In the case of philosophical literature, vernacularization occurred after a time lag of as much as four to five centuries, partly due to the challenge of assimilating the colossal body of preceding knowledge in the field. As an agent of this process of vernacularization, Nīscaldās is well aware of the ‘internal criticism,’ of heredity-based caste hierarchy within the earlier literature, as in portions of the *MBh* from almost two millennia prior, and he cites from these selections in support of the eligibility of anybody, irrespective of caste, to attain the knowledge of liberation. He is particularly selective in citing Śaṅkara as also supporting this position, but as became evident in section 4.4 above, Śaṅkara’s position on the eligibility of śūdras is more nuanced and politic. I have argued that, from an ultimate (*pāramārthika*) standpoint, Śaṅkara too subscribes to the same position as Nīscaldās and many others in the Advaita and *nirguṇī sant* traditions. In this context, Nīscaldās is not proposing anything new; he is simply making the point in a clear and uncompromising fashion that all humans have the right to knowledge of the highest truth, of liberation. Nīscaldās then actively embodies this point by writing in the vernacular. This can be viewed as a deliberately subversive act, essentially giving even the śūdras and lower castes access to Upaniṣadic, i.e., Vedic knowledge of liberation that the Hindu orthodoxy traditionally limits to just their listening to the *itihāsa* and *purāṇa* texts. By presenting the teachings of Vedānta in the vernacular, Nīscaldās is not just giving the śūdras and lower castes access, he is giving them a chance to read and study these texts on their own. Nīscaldās’s subversion is however restricted to just the Hindu sphere, the Dādūpanthī trend towards Hinduization and the tacit exclusion of any mention of Muslims that began in the time of Sundardās is well-entrenched by Nīscaldās’s time to where there is no mention of Muslims at all in his works.

5 On *Vṛtti* and the Means of Cognition

5.1 Introduction

The dissertation thus far has focused on the broader context of Nīścaldās – his Dādūpanthī background, biography, and patronage. The previous chapter examined his choice to write in the vernacular, driven by his views on caste (*jāti*). The remainder of the dissertation narrows its focus to his *magnum opus*, the *Vṛttiprabhākar* (*VP*), “The Illuminator of *Vṛttis*,”²⁷⁹ where he demonstrates great familiarity not just with the Advaita Vedānta corpus but also with the Nyāya, Mīmāṃsā and grammatical (*vyākaraṇa*) traditions. It is reputed to have been written at the request of his patron, Rājā Rāmsiṃha of Būndī, for a text aimed at more erudite readers (Pītāmbār 1917, 7).

Typically, Vedānta texts are organized as either sub-commentaries to or abridgements of existing works. For example, Padmapāda’s *Pañcapādikā*, and Sarvajñātman’s *Samkṣepa-śārīraka* are based on Śaṅkara’s commentary on the *BS*. Other independent texts present their perspective of Vedānta in the process of answering a specific question. For example, Dharmarāja Adhvarīndra’s *Vedānta-paribhāṣā* establishes the Vedānta epistemology by refuting Nyāya in its first six chapters dedicated to the six means of cognition, and then its last two chapters take up the nature of Brahman and the goal of Vedānta. Along similar lines, the *VP* is a novel structuring of the Vedānta doctrinal issues around three questions pertaining to the concept of *vṛtti* (provisionally translated as “mental modification by which cognition occurs” till we discuss this further in section 5.2): what is it, what is its cause, and what is its purpose. Mahādevānanda (seventeenth c. CE) also uses the concept of *vṛtti* as an organizational device in his *Tattvānusandhāna*, but only in its second and third of four chapters, and not as the central device. The central topic of all Vedānta texts is Brahman and the attainment of its knowledge, and it is important to understand *vṛttis* in this context, as the knowledge that one is Brahman is attained through a *vṛtti* in the form of Brahman (*brahmākāra vṛtti*). While one is not aware of one’s identity with Brahman, one relates to the objective world about us by means of *vṛttis*, and in effect creates one’s “reality” by means of these *vṛttis*. The concept of *vṛttis* is implicit in all of Advaita but has never been treated in the depth that it is by Nīścaldās in his *VP*. In providing answers to his three questions on *vṛtti*,

²⁷⁹ The term *vṛtti* will be explained shortly, in section 5.2, “What is a *vṛtti*?” on p. 117.

besides writing in the vernacular, Nīścaldās's unique contribution is his reorganization of over a millennium's worth of post-Śaṅkara Advaita literature, by presenting and then comparing various prior standpoints, followed by his defense of what may be considered valid and in keeping with Advaita doctrine, the refutation of other conflicting views where relevant, or when possible, a presentation of the means to reconcile the apparent conflict. A sense of Nīścaldās's achievements is provided by Pandit Pītāmbār, the commentator to Nīścaldās's *VS*, who writes that several pandits who knew Sanskrit read the *VP* in secret because they did not wish to be seen taking help from a vernacular (*bhāṣā*) text (1917, 7).

A close reading of the *VP* will provide us with a deeper insight into his thought processes and the influence his Advaita perspective had on his radical choice to write in the vernacular instead of Sanskrit. But before we can delve deeper, it will be productive to look at: 1) the internal structure of the *VP*; 2) the structure of corresponding rendering in chapters 5 through 9 of this dissertation; and 3) the layout of the remainder of this chapter.

5.1.1 The Internal Structure of the *VP*

The *VP* comprises eight chapters, *prakāśas*. In the KS edition which has been available virtually unchanged since 1899 CE, these chapters are further subdivided into numbered and titled subsections, but when compared to the only manuscript version available to me which precedes the printed version by over thirty years (Nīśchaladāsa 1868), these subdivisions do not appear in the manuscript but appear to be the interpolation of a later editor.²⁸⁰ In this dissertation, for ease of location and access, all references to the *VP* source are to the KS printed edition (Nīścaldās 1899), in the format “*VP* n.x, m,” where “n” is the chapter number, “x” the subsection, and “m” the page number(s). The manuscript is only organized into chapters, with virtually no punctuation or word breaks past the first twelve folios, and the chapter names only appear in the colophon at their end.

The colophon chapter names for the first six chapters are preserved in the KS edition where they are used as the chapter titles. The first six chapters are named for the six means of cognition accepted by Advaita Vedānta, presented in descending order of the number of orthodox systems²⁸¹ which accept them, as 1) perception (*pratyakṣa*), 2) inference

²⁸⁰ See Appendices 2 and 3 for a comparison of the *VP* across various versions.

²⁸¹ These are essentially the classical *śad-darśanas*, the six schools of Hindu philosophy. Differences between the Old (*prācīna*) and New (*navya*) Nyāya schools are considered where relevant. For the most part, the Vaiśeṣika school is treated

(*anumāna*), 3) verbal testimony (*śabda*), 4) analogy (*upamāna*), 5) postulation (*arthāpatti*) and 6) non-cognition (*anupalabdhi*). These first six chapters, *VP* 1-6, comprise a little under 45% of the total length of the *VP*. *VP* 7 accounts for another third of the total, while *VP* 8 is nearly a quarter of the text.²⁸² For the last two chapters however, there is a divergence between the manuscript colophon names and the KS chapter titles. For *VP* 7, the colophon name²⁸³ is “The elaboration of the types of *vyrtti*s, followed by a refutation of the theory that the object of erroneous cognition is real (*sat-khyāti*),²⁸⁴ etc., wherein the investigation of intrinsic validity for the sake of refuting the theory that the erroneous cognition is the failure to distinguish between the real recollection and the real substratum (*akhyāti*).”²⁸⁵ By comparison, the title in the KS ed. reads, “Types of *vyrtti*s, elaboration of the [Advaita] theory that the object of erroneous cognition is logically indeterminate (*anirvacanīya-khyāti*),²⁸⁶ refutation of [other] doctrines of perceptual error, and the investigation of the means of cognition via intrinsic validity.”²⁸⁷ For *VP* 8, the divergence is not as significant. The colophon name reads, “The nature of *jīva* and *Īśvara*, followed by the elaboration on the use of *vyrtti* and the nature of the cessation of the conceived,”²⁸⁸ whereas the KS chapter title reads, “The nature of *jīva* and *Īśvara*, and the elaboration on the use of *vyrtti* along with the nature of the cessation of the conceived.”²⁸⁹ [The terms, *jīva* and *Īśvara*, are being left untranslated and shall be explained shortly]. The difference between the manuscript colophons and the KS chapter titles seem to suggest an editorial “tightening” moving from the manuscript to the printed version.

as part of the Nyāya, the two are often referred to jointly as Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika. Differences within Mīmāṃsā, such as the Bhāṭṭa and Prābhākara sub-schools are considered. Sāṅkhya is considered a separate school but is unclear as to whether Nīśchaladās treats Pātañjala-yoga as separate from Sāṅkhya. The only reference to Patañjali is to the grammarian.

²⁸² The distribution of pages per chapter (in the KS ed.) are as follows: *VP* 1: 7.5%, *VP* 2: 2%, *VP* 3: 10.5%, *VP* 4: 2%, *VP* 5: 2%, *VP* 6: 19.5%, *VP* 7: 33%, *VP* 8: 23.5%.

²⁸³ ... *vyrtti-bheda-nirūpaṇa-prasaṅga-prāpta-sat-khyāty-ādi-nirākaraṇāgatākhyāti-nirākaraṇa-prayojaka-svataḥpramātvā-nirūpaṇa-nāma saptamaḥ prakāśaḥ* (Nīśchaladāsa 1868, 7.65-6).

²⁸⁴ *Sat-khyāti* will be explained in section 6.3.2.

²⁸⁵ *Akhyāti* will be explained in section 6.3.6.

²⁸⁶ *Anirvacanīya-khyāti* will be explained in section 6.3.1.

²⁸⁷ *atha vyrtti-bheda anirvacanīya-khyāti-maṇḍana khyāti-khaṇḍana au svataḥ pramātvā-pramāṇa-nirūpaṇa nāma saptama-prakāśa-prārambha* (*VP* 7, 196).

²⁸⁸ ... *jīveśvara-svarūpa-nirūpaṇa-pūrvaka vyrtti-prayojana-nirūpaṇa-sahita kalpita-nivṛtti-svarūpa-nirūpaṇaṁ nāma aṣṭamaḥ prakāśaḥ* (Nīśchaladāsa 1868, 8.41).

²⁸⁹ *atha jīveśvara-svarūpa-vyrtti-prayojana-sahita kalpita-nivṛtti-svarūpa-nirūpaṇaṁ nāmāṣṭama-prakāśa prārambhaḥ* (*VP* 8, 343).

Two things should be apparent from the above consideration of the *VP* chapter names:

1) *VP* 1-6 are the answer to the first question posed at the outset of the text, “What is a *vr̥tti*?” *VP* 7 is the answer to the second question, “What is the cause of a *vr̥tti*?” and *VP* 8 answers the third question, “What is the purpose of a *vr̥tti*?” 2) The last two chapters, *VP* 7-8 are rather sprawling in scope, answering not just the questions pertaining to *vr̥ttis*, but also in the process raising several underlying issues that are dealt with exhaustively in order to do full justice to the original questions. Nīścaldās’s successor Dayārām wrote Rājā Rāmsiṃha that Nīścaldās was unable to conclude the *VP* due to his unexpected death. The completeness of the *VP* as we presently have it is discussed in section 10.6 below, p. 381.

5.1.2 The Structure of the Rendering of *VP* in This Dissertation

To make the underlying structure more apparent, this dissertation structures its treatment of *VP* differently, instead of mapping directly chapter for chapter. *VP* 1-6 are largely presented as a summary, as Advaita epistemology has been already been dealt with rather extensively by many.²⁹⁰ Only noteworthy sections are paraphrased in detail. However, *VP* 7-8 are presented in detail, as they contain Nīścaldās’s distinctive interpretations. Where necessary, some systematization is introduced in the way of numbered lists, etc., to make the analyses easier to follow. While still a paraphrase, every attempt has been made to stay true to Nīścaldās’s voice, and judicious editorial judgment has been exercised to keep the text readable in English without loss of meaning. I have made every attempt to allow Nīścaldās speak for himself while confining my own remarks to the opening and closing portions of each section, to the footnotes, or delimited within square brackets. A brief overview of chapters 5 through 9²⁹¹ as they map to the *VP* is provided next, and at the beginning of each chapter of the dissertation, a more detailed introduction will also be provided.

In chapter 5, Nīścaldās’s initial brief answer to the first question (what is a *vr̥tti*) in *VP* 1, namely, that *vr̥ttis* facilitate cognition, leads to a detailed discussion of the six accepted means of cognition (*pramāṇa*) in Vedānta (*VP* 1-6), which are presented in summary form with some exceptions. While introducing the concept of *vr̥tti*, Nīścaldās describes the two

²⁹⁰ Dharmarāja Adhvarīndra’s *Vedānta-paribhāṣā* (1550-1650) and Vimuktātman’s *Iṣṭa-siddhi* (850-976 CE) to name just a couple of treatments.

²⁹¹ Whenever a reference is made to “chapter n”, it is to a chapter in this dissertation, while chapters (*prakāśa*) of the *VP* will be referred to as “*VP* n,” “n” being the chapter number in both instances.

types of cognition, direct (*pramā*) and indirect (*apramā*) (*VP* 1.1, 1-4). In answering the second question (what is the cause of a *vṛtti*), Nīścaldās further develops this *vṛtti* typology (*VP* 7.3-6, 206-21).

Indirect cognitions can be false, and chapter 6 examines Nīścaldās's presentation of the Advaita view of superimposition (*adhyāsa*), which is held to be the cause of erroneous cognition. A discussion and defense of the Advaita theory of erroneous cognition, (*anirvacanīya-khyāti-vāda*), namely, the theory that the object of erroneous cognition is logically indeterminate (*anirvacanīya*), is followed by the presentation and refutation of five other theories of erroneous cognition. In the course of refuting one of these theories, an objection is raised by the proponent of the theory that the erroneous cognition is the failure to distinguish between the real recollection and real substratum (*akhyāti*), that if one has doubts regarding the validity (*pramāṭva*) of any given cognition, one will not engage in any definite activity (*pravṛtti*). Chapter 6 concludes with Nīścaldās establishing that this objection is valid for *akhyāti* too.

Chapter 7 sees Nīścaldās address the inapplicability of this objection to Advaita, by analyzing the nature of validity and invalidity. By answering the second question concerning *vṛttis* (what is their cause), this concludes the discussion of types of cognition which began towards the end of chapter 5, and also marks the end of *VP* 7. Next, Nīścaldās begins his answer to the third question, "what is the purpose of a *vṛtti*?" In brief, the primary purpose of a *vṛtti* is the cessation (*nivṛtti*) of ignorance (*ajñāna*). To thoroughly understand this, Nīścaldās embarks on an examination of the locus of ignorance: is it the individual being (*jīva*), is it Īśvara (the theistic creator), or is it elsewhere? Nīścaldās presents the principal Advaita views on the locus of ignorance and the relation of consciousness to the erroneous cognitions, the differences between these views, and a way in which these views may be reconciled.

Chapter 8 takes up Nīścaldās's continuing examination of ignorance as it manifests in the empirical sphere as well as in the dream state. It also contains a discussion on the nature of reality (*sattā*) versus illusoriness (*mithyātva*), where he repudiates the reality of the manifest world (*prapañca*). Next, Nīścaldās takes up the means to dispel this illusoriness, discussing the utility of action (*karma*) and renunciation (*sannyāsa*) in effecting knowledge as proposed

by various Advaita thinkers, as well as the eligibility of non-brahman castes for self-realization.

Chapter 9 presents Nīścaldās's return to the third question, namely, the purpose of a *vr̥tti* being to bring about the cessation of ignorance through Brahman-realization (*tattva-jñāna*). Nīścaldās explores the nature of this *vr̥tti*, what happens once it occurs, the means for effecting Brahman-realization, and whether the realization is immediate or not. Nīścaldās suggests that a *vr̥tti* is the cause of an individual's (*jīva*) experience of the cycle of life-death-rebirth (*saṃsāra*) by relation to the three states (waking, dreaming, and deep sleep), and also the cause of the attainment of liberation. Different arguments regarding the nature of the cessation of what was conceived (*kalpita*), namely, *saṃsāra*, are considered before Nīścaldās presents his own view, and his conclusion.

5.1.3 The Layout of the Remainder of Chapter 5

Section 5.2 introduces the concept of *vr̥tti* the three questions pertaining to it, the term *antaḥ-karaṇa*, and a provisional answer to first and easiest question, what is a *vr̥tti*? A *vr̥tti* is first defined as “the modification of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* (provisionally translated as “mind” for the moment, although it is more than just the mind) and ignorance (*ajñāna*),” The definition is then further refined to exclude certain inapplicable modifications. A *vr̥tti* leads to cognition, which can be characterized as valid or invalid in section 5.3. Discussion of valid cognition leads Nīścaldās to take up each of the six means of cognition (*pramāṇa*) which are accepted by Vedānta: 1) perception (*pratyakṣa*), 2) inference (*anumāna*), 3) verbal testimony (*śabda*), 4) analogy (*upamāna*), 5) postulation (*arthāpatti*) and 6) non-cognition (*anupalabdhi*). Each *pramāṇa* is summarized in its subsection (5.4.1 through 5.4.6) and the flow of the argument will be presented at the start where required. The utility of each *pramāṇa* in attaining the knowledge of Brahman is also discussed.

In connection with perception, Nīścaldās explores whether or not to accept the mind as a sense organ for perception. In connection with inference, Nīścaldās also considers whether or not *parāmarśa*, recollection of the perception of the probans qualified by invariable concomitance of the probandum, is the instrument (*karaṇa*) or the intermediate cause (*vyāpāra*) for inferential cognition, or if the memory (*smṛti*) of the invariable concomitance constitutes an inference as an intermediate cause. Verbal testimony requires a detailed

discussion of a different sense of the word “*ṛtti*,” namely, as the “significatory function” of individual words, whether this is direct (*śakti*) or indirect/implied (*lakṣaṇā*), and of the various kinds of indirect signification. This issue is particularly important for Vedānta in order to explain how the great Upaniṣadic statements (*mahā-vākya*) can bring about the direct cognition of the identity between *jīva* and Brahman [The term *jīva* meaning “individual” or “living being” will be left untranslated henceforth]. In this context, the six characteristics (*ṣaḍ-līṅga*) that determine the intent (*tātparya*) of Vedic statements are discussed, along with the four accessories to verbal cognition: expectancy (*ākāṅkṣā*), compatibility (*yogyatā*), intention (*tātparya*), and proximity (*āsatti*). The treatment of analogy (*upamāna*) and postulation (*arthāpatti*) are rather straightforward, but that of non-cognition (*anupalabdhi*) is rather involved and requires a description and critique of the Nyāya categories of non-existence (*abhāva*).

Lastly, section 5.5 covers Nīscaldās’s treatment of the causes of a *ṛtti*, in order to facilitate a detailed discussion of the different types of *ṛttis*, i.e., as valid/direct (*pramā*), indirect (*apramā*), or recollection (*smṛti*). The latter two are further categorized depending upon their being true (*yathārtha*) or false (*ayathārtha*).

We now begin with the *VP* itself.

5.2 What is a *Ṛtti*?

Nīscaldās opens his *Ṛttiprabhākar* (*VP*) with a *dohā* (rhyming couplet)²⁹²:

*asti bhāti priya sindhu meṃ, nāma rūpa jañjāla;
lakṣi tihim ātma-svarūpa nija, hvai tatkāla nihāla.*

In the ocean of being, manifestation, and dearness [i.e. Brahman],
name and form are a trap.²⁹³

Upon seeing the nature of one’s own *ātmā* there, one will immediately
become happy.

The *dohā* is followed by the statement, “By the *ṛtti*, ‘I am Brahman,’ ignorance and its results are removed, and the highest happiness (*ānanda*), is attained – this is ultimate purpose (*siddhānta*) of Vedānta. In this connection, there arises the desire to know: ‘What is a *ṛtti*,

²⁹² This is one of the only three *dohās* occurring in *VP*. The other two occur at *VP* 7.39 and *VP* 8.28.

²⁹³ This is a yet another reference to *Dṛg-dṛśya-viveka* v. 20 by Vidyāraṇya/Bhāratīrtha; Nīscaldās also alluded to this verse in *VS* v. 7.117. See n. 176 for the Sanskrit. verse.

who is the cause of a *vr̥tti* and what is its purpose?’ This text, *Vṛttiprabhākar*, The Illuminator of *Vṛttis*, has been written with these [questions in mind].”²⁹⁴

The term *vr̥tti* is complex and multivalent. For its meaning in the Advaita context, Grimes’ Concise Dictionary of Indian Philosophy translates *vr̥tti* as “mental mode” and explains it as:

a modification of the mind whose function is to manifest objects. It is what makes knowledge possible according to Advaita. It serves as a connection link between the knowing subject and the known object. It is a transformation of either the internal organ or of nescience (*avidyā*). It goes out through the senses and pervades the object (1996, 403-4 s.v).

Vṛtti has also been translated by others as “mood of the mind (*MW*),” “mental state,”²⁹⁵ “cognition,”²⁹⁶ and the ill-chosen “psychosis.”²⁹⁷ In *VS*, Pt. Pītāmbār provides four further meanings of *vr̥tti* that may be appropriate in in other contexts: 1) relation of a word to its meaning; 2) that which occurs, exists; 3) a feminine proper noun; 4) the activity of the breaths;²⁹⁸ 5) a section of a grammar (251n438). Yet another common sense of *vr̥tti* is a commentary or a gloss on a specific *sūtra* (aphorism). Here, the term *vr̥tti*, in the context of enabling knowledge, will be deliberately left untranslated to avoid providing an incomplete or misleading equivalent.

According to Nīścaldās, “the modification of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* and ignorance (*ajñāna*) is called a *vr̥tti*” (*VP* 1, 1). The term *antaḥ-karaṇa* will also be left untranslated. Commonly it is rendered as the “inner-organ” or “inner sense/instrument,” which is what the Sanskrit means literally, except that, unlike the other five senses (sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch), the *antaḥ-karaṇa* is not a physical organ or sense. In Vedānta, the *antaḥ-karaṇa* is defined as

²⁹⁴ *ahaṃ brahmāsmi yā vr̥ttiḥ saim kārya-sahit ajñān kī nivr̥tti aur pramānand kī prāpti hovai ha, yah vedānt kā siddhānt hai. tahām yah jijñāsā hovai hai, vr̥tti kiskūṃ kahai haiṃ aur vr̥tti kī kārṇ kaun hai aur vr̥tti kī prayojan kyā hai, yātaiṃ vr̥ttiprabhākar nām granth likaiṃ haiṃ.* (*VP* 1.1, 1). This opening is very similar to, but not exactly the same as the opening of the section on *vr̥tti* in the *Advaita-cintā-kaustubha*, Mahādevānanda-sarasvatī’s auto-commentary on the *Tattvānusandhāna*, *dvitīya paricchedaḥ* (1994, 127; 1922, 125-6). Mahādevānanda flourished ca. 1600-1700 CE (Thangaswami 1980, 371-2), but is dated to the latter half of the seventeenth c. by K. Srinivasan and T. V. Vasudeva (Mahādevānanda-sarasvatī 2008, xvii-xviii). Also see n. 303.

²⁹⁵ By Mādhavānanda (Adhvarīndra 1972, 5,15)

²⁹⁶ By Comans (Tōtakācārya 1996, 11)

²⁹⁷ By T. M. P. Mahadevan (2006, 11). As Bilimoria points out, “[the term ‘psychosis’] has strong psychological and not epistemic denotation (1980, 44n16)” and Mahadevan is well aware of it: “The term *psychosis* is used by modern psychologists to indicate an abnormal state of mind. [But] here it is employed to mean a transformation either of the mind or of its cause, nescience” (51n11).

²⁹⁸ “breaths,” pl., is a reference to the vital breaths (*prāṇa*), usually five in number, and sometimes ten. Nīścaldās provides a detailed description of the breaths in *VS* (5.255, 151-2).

consisting of four components: ²⁹⁹ mind (*manas*), intellect (*buddhi*), subconscious (*citta*), and ego (*ahaṅkāra*).³⁰⁰

Nīścaldās further refines his definition of *ṛtti* as “the modification of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* and ignorance which reveals the object (*viśaya*) in the form of cognition (*jñāna*).”³⁰¹ This refinement is necessary to exclude a) the modifications of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* such as anger and happiness which do not reveal any object, and b) the modifications of ignorance alone, such as space [and the other elements] which do not reveal themselves.³⁰² Although the emotional modification of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* (such as happiness, sorrow, desire, contentment, anger, forgiveness, fortitude and the lack thereof, embarrassment, fear, etc.) are often referred to as *ṛttis* in many places, Nīścaldās defends his definition as representing the technical (*pāribhāṣika*) sense of *ṛtti* for Advaita and conforming to the definition given in the *Tattvānusandhāna* and [its auto-commentary] the *Advaita-cintā-kaustubha*.³⁰³

5.3 Types of *Ṛtti*-cognition (*Ṛtti-jñāna*)

Ṛtti-cognition, i.e., *ṛtti* as cognition, is of two types, valid or direct (*pramā*) and indirect (*apramā*).³⁰⁴ A valid cognition is that which is produced by the means of valid

²⁹⁹ *Tattvabodha* 7.3.2.2: ... *mano-buddhy-ahaṅkāra-cittāntaḥkaraṇāni sambhūtāni* (Vasudevendramuni 2011, 5; Śaṅkarācārya 1981b, 36-39). [The authorship of *Tattvabodha* is usually ascribed to Śaṅkara, but is most likely by Vasudevendramuni (1700-1765 CE) as per Thangaswami (1980, 396-7) and verified by the opening *maṅgala śloka* where his guru Vasudevendrayogī is acknowledged]. Also *Vedānta-sāra* vv. 65-69 (Sadānanda 1974, 46-7), *Pañcikaraṇa-vārtika* vv. 33-4 (Sureśvarācārya and Sarasvatī 1970, 19).

³⁰⁰ For a discussion on Śaṅkara’s conception of *antaḥ-karaṇa*, see Mayeda (1968/69, 225).

³⁰¹ *VP* 1.1, 1: *viśaya kā prakāśaka jo antaḥ-karaṇa kā aur ajñāna kā pariṇāma so ṛtti kahiye hai. ... jñāna-rūpa pariṇām tem prakāśa hovai hai, tāhī ko ṛtti kahaiṁ haiṁ*.

³⁰² From the Advaita perspective, the five elements (*mahā-bhūtas*, space, air, fire, water, and earth) are modifications of ignorance; for them to be perceived, the senses must be in contact with them.

³⁰³ *Tattvānusandhāna* 2.1: “A *ṛtti* is a particular modification of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* and ignorance that manifests the object-consciousness. Manifestation is the giving rise to direct knowledge or the removal of concealment. *ṛttir nāma viśaya-caitanyābhivyañjako ’ntaḥkaraṇajñānayoḥ pariṇāma viśeṣaḥ. abhivyañjakatvaṁ nāmāparokṣa-vyavahāra-janakatvaṁ āvaraṇa-nivartakatvaṁ vā*” (Mahādevānanda-sarasvatī 1994, 127).

³⁰⁴ The terms *pramā* and *apramā* are opposites of each other, yet I have chosen to translate them as “valid” and “indirect.” To render *pramā* as “direct” to regain the opposition in English results in a weakening of the term *pramā*, whose primary sense is of validity (from the Skt. *√mā*, “to measure, conclude,” which, prefixed with *pra-* gives “to know,” or nominally, “true, correct knowledge.” Rendering *apramā* as “invalid” however would lead to an undesired definitional contradiction that *apramā* cognitions are both invalid and true. Wherever necessary, I shall remind the reader that *pramā* means a cognition that is both “valid” and “direct” by translating it as “valid or direct.”

cognition (*pramāṇa*); anything else is considered indirect. A valid cognition is true

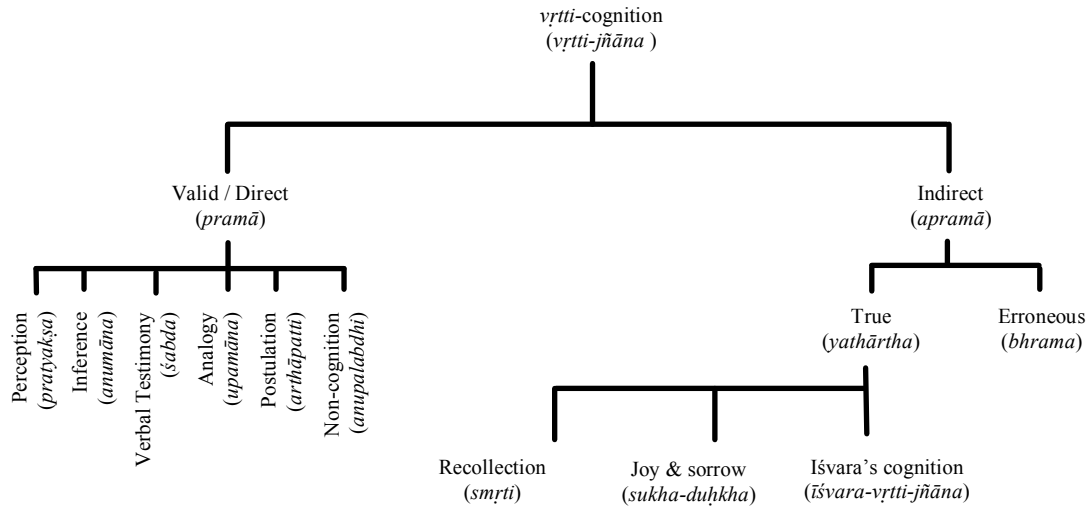


Figure 8: Types of *vṛtti*-cognition (preliminary)

(*yathārtha*); an indirect cognition can be either true or erroneous (*bhrama*). Indirect cognitions produced by defects (*doṣa*) are termed erroneous, whereas those produced by non-defective means (other than the means of cognition) are termed true. Examples of erroneous cognitions are the cognition of silver in mother-of-pearl resulting from the defect of similarity (*sādṛśya*) and the cognition of bitterness in sugar resulting from a defect in the liver system.³⁰⁵ Examples of true, indirect cognitions are: 1) recollections (*smṛti*), which are caused by impressions (*saṃskāra*) of prior true experiences; 2) the experience of joy or sorrow, which is not caused by any means of cognition but is caused by a modification of the *antaḥ-karaṇa*'s *sattva* (purity) and *rajas* (activity) attributes in conjunction with favorable or unfavorable objects, governed by one's karma; and 3) Īśvara's cognition, desire and acts, which are caused by the collective karma of all beings and not by means of cognition.³⁰⁶ This is graphically represented in Figure 8 above as a preliminary classification. Nīścaldās elaborates on this scheme of valid and indirect cognitions in *VP* 7, to which we will return shortly (in section 5.5), after looking at the means of valid cognition (*pramāṇa*).

³⁰⁵ Technically, a defect in *pitta*, one of the three ayurvedic humors.

³⁰⁶ What I have translated as *karma* in two instances here is Nīścaldās's reference to *dharma* and *adharma* ("dharmādika nimitta se ... *VP* 1.1, 2") in the first instance, and *adṛṣṭa* in the second (*VP* 1.1, 4). Both instances are implicitly referring to the unseen merits (*punya*) and demerits (*pāpa*) of a person.

5.4 The Means of Valid Cognition (*Pramāṇa*) in Advaita

The goal of *VP* is to lead the reader to the knowledge of Brahman through the understanding of *vṛttis*. As just discussed in the preceding section, *vṛtti*-cognitions can be direct and valid (*pramā*) or indirect. To thoroughly understand *vṛttis*, one therefore must also understand valid cognitions and their means (*pramāṇa*). Nīścaldās therefore presents the six means of cognition which are also accepted by the Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsakas: 1) perception (*pratyakṣa*), 2) inference (*anumāna*), 3) verbal testimony (*śabda*), 4) analogy (*upamāna*), 5) postulation (*arthāpatti*) and 6) non-cognition (*anupalabdhi*). He states that, although both the author of the *Brahma-sūtra* and Śaṅkara did not enumerate the means of cognition, Advaita accepts the opinion of the Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsaka system wherever it does not contradict the accepted doctrine (*siddhānta*).³⁰⁷ In the *VP*, Nīścaldās first presents the Nyāya view for each means of cognition (*pramāṇa*) in detail and then the differences between the Nyāya and Advaita perspectives. There is a long history of the various philosophical schools influencing the development of one another's viewpoints. For example, the Nyāya proponent Udayana (eleventh c. CE) criticized the Buddhist theories of momentariness and defended the existence of God in his works, *Nyāyā-kusumāñjali* and *Ātma-tattva-viveka* (Matilal 1977b, 96).³⁰⁸ The Advaitin Śrīharṣa (twelfth c.) criticized Udayana's formulation of Nyāya in his *Khaṇḍana-khaṇḍa-khāḍya*. The Navya-Nyāya response to Śrīharṣa was presented by Gaṅgeśa (ca. 1320 CE) in his *Tattva-cintāmaṇi*, although his main focus was on the Prābhākara Mīmāṃsā tenets (King 1999a, 61). From the twelfth century onwards, there arose an ongoing tradition of philosophical disputes between the Naiyāyikas and the Mīmāṃsā schools, and by extension, between the Naiyāyikās and the Advaita Vedāntins. The Advaita perspective on the means of cognition had already been treated by Nīścaldās in *VS* 4.191-196. Here each of these individual means of cognition will be described in brief from the Advaita perspective, as presented in *VP*, along with noteworthy and interesting issues that Nīścaldās raises. They are presented ranked in descending order of the number of orthodox systems which accept them (*VP* 4.1, 92).

³⁰⁷ This echoes Bhāratīrtha/Vidyāraṇya in his *Vivaraṇa-prameya-saṅgraha*: “vyavahāre bhaṭṭa-naya[h], with regard to empirical matters, the Bhāṭṭa system [is adequate]” (Vidyāraṇya and Tailaṅga 1893, 16). On the authorship of this text, see Pahlajrai (2005, 17-35)

³⁰⁸ The Buddhist views were of the dialectician Jñānaśrī in his *Īśvara-bhaṅga-kārikā* (Plott 1984, 477).

5.4.1 Perception (*Pratyakṣa*)

Following the Nyāya system, Niścaldās first presents six sense organs (*indriya*): 1) ears; 2) skin; 3) eyes; 4) tongue; 5) nose; and 6) mind. The perceptual cognition (*pratyakṣa pramā*) takes place upon the contact of the appropriate sense organ with its object. Erroneous cognition is described in the Nyāya fashion, namely the perception of a thing as something else (*anyathā-khyāti*).³⁰⁹ When a rope is perceived as a snake, the perceived snake is real, but exists elsewhere; it appears as though before one due to an extraordinary process caused by the memory of a past perception of a real snake. For Nyāya, *ātmā* is the locus (*āśraya*) of all cognition and erroneous cognition is produced by defective senses, but in Vedānta, the erroneous cognition is not produced by the senses; the *antaḥ-karaṇa* is both the locus as well its material cause (*upādāna kāraṇa*). [The term *ātmā*, for Advaita, signifies either the individual self or the absolute self. It can also mean “the breath.” Often it is evident which sense is intended, but sometimes it may deliberately be ambiguous. Further, for Nyāya and other philosophical systems, there are subtle differences in what *ātmā* connotes. Hence I have chosen to leave this term untranslated].

In Nyāya, knowledge, desire, effort, happiness, sorrow, hatred, merit (*dharma*) and demerit (*adharma*) are attributes of *ātmā*,³¹⁰ but for Vedānta these are modifications of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* and hence its (the *antaḥ-karaṇa*’s) attributes. Erroneous cognition, for Vedānta, is not a modification of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* but of ignorance (*avidyā*). When a rope is erroneously cognized, the *antaḥ-karaṇa* goes out the eyes and assumes the rope’s form as “this”, but it doesn’t take on its rope-ness and other attributes due to defects (*doṣa*). The ignorance located in the consciousness delimited by the *vr̥tti* in the form of the rope’s “this-ness” (*idam-ākāra-vr̥tti-upahita-cetana-stha-avidyā*)³¹¹ undergoes modification into snake-, or stick- or garland-form cognition, depending on the defect and impression (*saṃskāra*) in the perceiver. This erroneous cognition is the erroneous perception of an object as something

³⁰⁹ Described in greater detail in section 6.3.5 starting on p. 188.

³¹⁰ See *TS* 4,73 (5,59,134-6)

³¹¹ The inter-element *sandhi* is not preserved in the original itself (*VP* 1.17, 29).

else that is neither real nor unreal (*anirvacanīya-khyāti*);³¹² it is not real like a snake, stick or garland, nor is it unreal, since there is *something* being seen as “this” in both cases.³¹³

Regarding the status of the mind (*manas*) as a sense-organ, Nīścaldās is quite catholic. The Vedāntin Vācaspati Miśra (900-980 CE³¹⁴) considers the mind to be a sense-organ³¹⁵ and happiness and sorrow to be valid cognitions of the mind. For Vedāntins such as Padmapāda (750 CE) who do not accept the mind as a sense-organ, happiness and sorrow are revealed by the witness-consciousness (*sākṣī*), whereas immediate cognition (*aparokṣa jñāna*) is not caused by the sense-organ but arises when there is identity between the *vṛtti*-consciousness and the object-consciousness. This, Nīścaldās reminds us, has been explained in *VS* (4.200, 110-11).

First, Nīścaldās raises a series of defects pertaining to Vācaspati’s position that the mind is a sense-organ. 1) Unlike each of the other senses, the mind does not have a special object. 2) *BhG* 3.42 would be violated, where the mind is said to be “superior to the senses, *indriyebhyaḥ paraṃ manaḥ*,” and not included among the senses. 3) All revelation (*śruti*) and composed scripture (*smṛti*) are in agreement that Brahman is not an object of mind-cognition, but, by accepting the mind as a sense, Vācaspati suggests that the direct realization (*sākṣātkāra*) of Brahman too is generated by the mind sense-organ, i.e., the realization is mental, which is opposed to scripture. Further, 4) the mind is a state of the *antaḥ-karaṇa*. By being the locus of immediate cognition, the *antaḥ-karaṇa* is the agent of cognition, and that which is the agent (*kartā*), cannot be the instrument (*karaṇa*). [Here, Nīścaldās is holding fast to the definition of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* discussed earlier (on p. 120), that it consists of four components, the mind (*manas*), intellect (*buddhi*), subconscious (*citta*), and ego (*ahaṅkāra*)]. Thus, Nīścaldās concludes that the mind cannot be a sense-organ.

³¹² Described in greater detail in section 6.3.1, “*Anirvacanīya-khyāti-vāda*, the Advaita theory that the object of erroneous cognition is logically indeterminate,” starting on p. 138.

³¹³ Usually the word *anirvacanīya* is translated as “indescribable” but it is used to describe that which is logically indeterminate, neither absolutely real nor empirically false.

³¹⁴ Potter (1999, 632)

³¹⁵ In his comm. Bhāmāṭi on *BS* 2.4.17, Vācaspati states “*manasas tv indriyatve smṛter avagate kvacid indriyebhyo bhedenopādānaṃ go-balīvarda-nyāyena. athavā indriyāṇāṃ vartamāna-mātra-viśayatvān manasas tu traikālyā-gocaratvād bhedenābhīdhānam*. But being that the *smṛti* texts are understood to consider the mind as a sense-organ in places by the difference from the [other] senses, along the lines of the rule of the particular term ‘bull’ restricting the general term ‘cows’ [on being mentioned along with it]. Or, being [considered] present among the sense-organs, but being named separately because of the mind having its objects from the past, present and future” (Śaṅkarācārya and Sastri 1938, 647).

But Nīścaldās next states that, on further reflection, these are not truly defects, and he resolves each in turn. 1) Happiness, sorrow, desire are the special (*asādhāraṇa*) objects of the mind, and one who is characterized by an *antaḥ-karaṇa* is called a *jīva*. 2) In *BhG* 3.42, *indriyas* denote external sense organs. Thus, there is no conflict to say that the mind is superior to the external sense organs. 3) Brahman is not an object of the mind. It is not an object of *vṛtti* either, except for the *vṛtti* that removes the concealment [by ignorance].³¹⁶ Besides, *TU* 2.9.1³¹⁷ indicates that Brahman is not an object of verbal testimony (*śabda-pramāṇa*) either. Brahman is only the object of the knowledge produced by the secondary signification (*lakṣaṇā-vṛtti*)³¹⁸ of verbal testimony, and even in that case only in the form of removing the concealment (*āvaraṇa*).³¹⁹ 4) The *antaḥ-karaṇa* can be the agent by virtue of being the locus (*āśraya*) of cognition, and the mind as the modification of *antaḥ-karaṇa* can be an instrument of valid cognition, and therefore, also a means of cognition (*pramāṇa*). Nīścaldās says, in essence (*sāragrāhī dṛṣṭi se*, *VP* 1.19), it does not damage one's understanding of Vedānta, i.e., one's knowledge of Brahman, to accept Vācaspati's view that the mind is a sense-organ.³²⁰ Thus, we have the five sense-organs and the mind as the sixth means of perceptual cognition per Vācaspati, whereas in Padmapāda's system, verbal testimony (*śabda*) is the sixth means, which alone is responsible for direct perceptual knowledge of Brahman. Nīścaldās seems to suggest that since neither view of the mind hinders a seeker's attainment of Brahman, one is free to choose the view that personally resonates best.

³¹⁶ Nīścaldās provides more details on the role of *vṛtti* in *VS* 4.211-12, 117-20

³¹⁷ *TU* 2.9.1: "yato vāco nivaratante aprāpya manasā sah, ānandaṃ brahmaṇo vidvān na bibhethi kutaścana. Words, along with the mind, turn back from Brahman, having failed to attain it; the one who knows the happiness of Brahman fears nothing."

³¹⁸ This will be treated in greater detail in section 5.4.3, "Verbal testimony (*śabda*)."

³¹⁹ Nīścaldās expounds upon this defect at considerably greater length than presented above, considering how mental cognition and verbal testimony can each give rise to knowledge of Brahman, and whether only one *pramāṇa* or two are required for direct knowledge of Brahman (*VP* 1.19, 31-32).

³²⁰ This view is echoed over a century later by Athalye et al.: "[The] controversy seems to be nothing more than a battle of words. So long as all are agreed in distinguishing the mind from the five external [sense] organs, and treating it as an entity by itself, it does not matter whether you call it an *indriya* or *antaḥ-karaṇa-vṛtti* or anything else. If the mind is an organ, it is an internal organ (*antar-indriya*) quite distinct from the external organs, while if it is not an organ it is so much akin to one that it shares many of its properties and functions" (Annambhaṭṭa and Govardhanamisra 1963, 150). Also see Mayeda's summary of the issue (Śaṅkarācārya 2006, 2:31-3).

5.4.2 Inference (*Anumāna*)

From the Nyāya perspective, the requirements for inferential cognition (*anumiti*) are: 1) the probandum, or the term to be proven (*sādhya*), the object of the inferential cognition, for example, fire on the mountain; 2) the probans or sign (*liṅga*) by the perception of which the object of inference is cognized, which is also known as the reason (*hetu*), for example, smoke; and 3) invariable concomitance or co-existence (*vyāpti*) between the probans and probandum, for example, where there is smoke, there is fire. The sequence of inferential cognition per Nyāya is as follows. First, the invariable concomitance of the probans (*hetu*) and probandum (*sādhya*) is witnessed. From this the invariable concomitance of the probans and the probandum is ascertained. Next, the probans is perceived in a particular locus (*pakṣa*), say on a mountain, and then the invariable concomitance is recalled. The recollection (*parāmarśa*) of the perception of the probans qualified by the invariable concomitance of the probandum then occurs.³²¹ This leads to the inferential cognition that the locus, the mountain, is fire-possessing.

In Old (*prācīna*) Nyāya, the recollection (*parāmarśa*) itself is inference. There is much variation within the Nyāya school as to whether recollection is the instrument (*karaṇa*) or the intermediate cause (*vyāpāra*) for inferential cognition, but all agree that without recollection no inference (*anumiti*) occurs. The Mīmāṃsakas, however, consider recollection to be dispensable (*anyathā-siddha*) and inessential to the cause of inferential cognition. Instead, some Mīmāṃsakas hold that inferential cognition is the memory (*smṛti*) of the invariable concomitance, others consider it to be the experience of the invariable concomitance as seen in the particular instance of the kitchen fire, and still others, the knowledge of the probans in the locus. As noted earlier (on p. 123),³²² Advaita accepts Mīmāṃsā wherever there is no disagreement. According to the *Vedānta-paribhāṣā*, the means (*karaṇa*) is the experience of invariable concomitance (*vyāpti*), and the latent impressions (*saṃskāra*) that arise either from perceptual cognition or through memory are the intermediate cause (*vyāpāra*).³²³ But

³²¹ TS 44: “*vyāpti-viśiṣṭa-pakṣa-dharmatā-jñānam parāmarśaḥ*, The knowledge of the locus possessing the property of being qualified by the [probans with the] invariable concomitance [of the probandum] is recollection (*parāmarśa*).” When the term “recollection” is used for brevity in the context of inference in this section, this meaning is to be assumed.

³²² See n. 307.

³²³ *Vedānta-paribhāṣā*: “*anumiti-karaṇaṁ ca vyāpti-jñānam. tat saṃskāro vāntara-vyāpāraḥ*. The instrument of inferential cognition is the knowledge of invariable concomitance. The latent impression of that [knowledge] is the intermediate cause” (Adhvarīndra 1972, 69).

Nīścaldās holds that the argument is not affected even if one holds that memory is the intermediate cause instead of a latent impression. Even though this would be counter to *Vedānta-paribhāṣā* and other Vedānta texts, it does not contradict revealed or composed scriptures (*śruti-smṛti*) or the accepted doctrine (*siddhānta*) since the scriptures and accepted doctrine are indifferent to whether a latent impression or memory is the intermediate cause or mediate activity (*vyāpāra*). Nonetheless, Nīścaldās suggests that it is actually more logical to accept memory of the invariable concomitance (*vyāpti*) as the intermediate cause. If the latent impressions of the invariable concomitance were held to be the instrument of inferential cognition, i.e., if inference were to occur due to unmanifest impressions, then even without seeing the smoke on the mountain, one should always infer fire there. Thus, one would be forced to state that manifest latent impressions are the cause of inferential cognition, but manifest latent impressions are nothing other than memory (*VP* 2.6, 40-1)!³²⁴

In Advaita, inference (*anumāna*) and inferential cognition (*anumiti*) are of two kinds: a) for oneself (*svārtha*); and b) for another (*parārtha*). According to Nyāya, in the case of inferential cognition for oneself, three cognitions have to occur: 1) perceptual cognition of smoke; 2) memory of its invariable concomitance (*vyāpti*) by fire; and finally 3) the recollection (*parāmarśa*) [in the form of the statement (*vākya*)], “the smoke which is pervaded by fire, the mountain possesses that (smoke).” But in Vedānta, recollection is not accepted as an instrument (*karana*). Instead, without such a recollection that employs a statement, the inferential cognition for oneself (*svārtha-anumiti*) takes place directly from the cognition of invariable concomitance, and its instrument, the knowledge of the invariable concomitance, is termed inference for oneself (*svārthānumāna*).

Inference for another (*parārtha*) occurs when one employs a statement to convince another person. According to Vedānta, three components are required: 1) thesis (*pratijñā*) as in “the mountain is smoke-possessing;” 2) reason (*hetu*), “because [it has] smoke;” and 3) example (*udāharaṇa*), “whatever is smoke-possessing is also fire-possessing, as in a kitchen.” The minor term is the locus (*pakṣa*), for example, mountain, and the object of inferential cognition is the probandum (*sādhya*). The location or locus (*adhikaraṇa*) refers to

³²⁴ Nīścaldās is somewhat sarcastic towards the author of the *Vedānta-paribhāṣā*, Dharmarāja Adhvarīndra (seventeenth c. CE) and its commentary (most likely by his son Rāmakṛṣṇa Adhvarin), with statements such as “What knowledge one might get from maintaining both [*saṃskāra* and *smṛti*] as causes of inference, one should ask Dharmarāja” (*VP* 2.6, 41).

the place where the desire to know the probandum arises and is then ascertained inferentially to have the probandum. The words that yield cognition of the probans (*liṅga*) are the reason (*hetu*). If the opponent is not convinced, for example, he holds that the smoke is not concomitant (*vyabhicārī*) with fire on the mountain, then that doubt is resolved via reasoning (*tarka*). The reasoning to overturn the opponent's doubt in this example is as follows: there is a cause-effect relation between fire and smoke, and, if one holds smoke to exist without fire, this relation is violated. Hence, the perception of smoke on the mountain gives rise to the inferential cognition of fire on the mountain.

In Advaita, inference for the sake of another has an additional function. The identity of the individual (*jīva*) and Brahman is ascertained through the great Upaniṣadic statements (*mahā-vākya*), i.e., verbal testimony. It can also be proven via inference as follows: 1) *jīva* is identical to Brahman, 2) because of consciousness; 3) wherever there is consciousness, there is identity with Brahman, for example, as in the case of Brahman. Here the locus (*pakṣa*) is *jīva*, the probandum (*sādhya*) is identity with Brahman, and the probans (*hetu*) is the state of possessing consciousness (*cetanatva*). The reasoning (*tarka*) is as follows. If the consciousness of *jīva* were not accepted as the reason for the identity with Brahman, the scripture (*śruti*) propounding the non-duality of consciousness would be contradicted, which is undesirable for the orthodox systems. Consider the syllogism: 1) The phenomenal world is unreal, 2) because it is negated by knowledge. 3) Whatever is negated by knowledge is unreal, as in the case of the silver perceived in mother-of-pearl.³²⁵ The real cannot be negated by knowledge. If the opponent were to accept negation of the phenomenal world through knowledge but not its unreality, then the scriptural utterances propounding the negation of the entire world would be contradicted.

Per Vedānta, inference by itself is not the cause for self-realization of Brahman because the accepted doctrine (*siddhānta*) maintains that, apart from the Vedānta utterances (*vākya*), no other means of knowledge takes up Brahman as its object. Therefore, inference merely serves to bring one closer (*saṁbhāvanā*) to the knowledge of Brahman.

³²⁵ *vyāvahārikaḥ prapañco mithyā, jñāna-nivartyatvāt. yatra yatra jñāna-nivartyatvaṁ tatra tatra mithyātvam. yathā śukti-rajatādau* (VP 2.9, 44).

5.4.3 Verbal Testimony (*Śabda*)

As the preceding section suggests, verbal testimony, specifically in the form of the great Upaniṣadic statements (*mahā-vākya*), is the most important means of cognition for Advaita as it alone can provide direct knowledge of Brahman. Nīścaldās spends more pages on the means of verbal cognition (*śabda pramāṇa*) than on perception and inference combined: 47 pages on *śabda pramāṇa* (VP 3), vs. 29 pages on *pratyakṣa* (VP 1.4-21) and 10 pages on *anumāna*, (VP 2).³²⁶ In brief, this section comprises the following. After defining verbal cognition and describing the process of cognition via verbal testimony, Nīścaldās undertakes an examination of the types of significatory function (*vṛtti*) of a word. This is followed by a discussion of the types of implication (*lakṣaṇā*) that are possible through words. Next, Nīścaldās presents the two types of verbal cognition, empirical (*vyāvahārika*), and absolute (*pāramārthika*), and their further typology, culminating in Vedānta statements that are either subsidiary (*avāntara*) or the “great sayings” (*mahā-vākya*), the purpose of both being the knowledge of Brahman. The form of implication by which the *mahā-vākyas* are comprehended is discussed, as well as the six characteristics (*ṣaḍ-liṅga*) of the intent (*tātparya*) of Vedic statements. The four accessories (*sahakārī*) to verbal cognition are also presented. Nīścaldās next discusses the method of resolution of potential conflicts between two means of cognition (*pramāṇa*) and asserts that the means for the more strongly desired object wins out. Lastly, the possibility for the Vedānta statements to possess intent (*tātparya*), given that the Vedas are not eternal, is examined. Let us look at verbal testimony in greater detail.

Nīścaldās defines verbal cognition (*śābdī pramā*) as knowledge of the relationships among the meanings of the words, or knowledge of the meanings and of the relationships among the words.³²⁷ The means of verbal cognition (*śabda pramāṇa*) is defined as the knowledge of all the words in a sentence qualified by their significatory function (*vṛtti*).³²⁸

Cognition through verbal testimony is said to function as follows. When one hears the words of a sentence, such as “the pot is blue,” the individual words trigger latent impressions

³²⁶ The next two means of cognition (*pramāṇa*) also collectively get only 18 pages: 10 pages on analogy (*upamāna*, VP 4), and 8 pages on postulation (*arthāpatti*, VP 5). Only non-cognition (*anupalabdhi*, VP 6) gets a significantly more detailed treatment, 87 pages.

³²⁷ VP 3.7, 54: ... *padārthan ke sambandh kā jñān athavā sambandh-sahit padārthan kā jñān vākyārth-jñān kahiye hai au śābdī pramā kahiye hai.*

³²⁸ VP 3.7, 54: *vṛtti-viśiṣṭa sakal padan kā jñān śabda-pramāṇa hai.* More on *vṛtti* as “significatory function” shortly.

that give rise to the memory of the meaning of the words, which in turn gives rise to the knowledge signified by each word independently. Then, the relationship between the individual words is known, providing the understanding of the sentence, for example, “the pot has identity with the color blue.”

The significatory function (*vṛtti*) of a word is a special form of *vṛtti* discussed earlier in this chapter. The significatory function, defined as the mutual relation between a word and its meaning,³²⁹ is of two types: 1) a direct significatory relation (*śakti-vṛtti*); and 2) an indirect or implied significatory relation (*lakṣaṇā-vṛtti*). The primary function of a word (*śakti*, also “power”), according to Nyāya, occurs as a result of Īśvara’s will, while the Mīmāṃsakas consider it a separate entity. According to Patañjali (the grammarian) and the *Mañjūṣā* text,³³⁰ the primary function of a word (*śakti*) is the identity-relation between a word and its meaning as signifier and signified. According to Advaita, *śakti* is the capacity (*sāmarthya*) of a word to evoke knowledge either directly or indirectly through the memory of its own meaning.³³¹ The meaning denoted by the word’s *śakti* is called its literal meaning (*śakyārtha*, or simply *śakya*). The implied significatory relation (*lakṣaṇā-vṛtti*) is the relation of the word to an indirect (*paramparā*) meaning. Such a meaning is called the implied meaning or connotative sense (*lakṣyārtha*, or simply *lakṣya*). For example, in the sentence, “the village of the cow herders is on the Ganga,”³³² the literal meaning (*śakya*) of the word “Ganga” is the river, but in this context, the implied meaning (*lakṣya*) is better suited, i.e., the bank of the river since the village cannot literally be on the river. Essentially, where the literal meaning of the word is not suited to the intent of the speaker, it is appropriate to consider the implied meaning.

In addition to the direct and indirect significatory relations (*śakti-* and *lakṣaṇā-vṛtti* respectively), some hold that there are two additional relations. 3) Attributive signification (*gaunī-vṛtti*) occurs when the word signifies the attribute or quality that is possessed by the meaning directly signified. In the sentence “Devadatta is a lion,” the attributes of strength (*śūratā*), etc., possessed by a lion are ascribed to Devadatta. This can easily be subsumed under indirect signification. 4) Allusive or suggestive signification (*vyañjanā-vṛtti*) occurs

³²⁹ VP 3.2, 46: *pad artha kā jo āpas meṃ sambandh tākūṃ vṛtti kahaiṃ haiṃ.*

³³⁰ The *Mañjūṣā* is a commentary by Kṛṣṇa Bhaṭṭa on the *Śaktivāda* by Gadādhara Bhaṭṭācārya (1927) who fl. ca. 1700 CE.

³³¹ VP 3.3, 47: *padan maiṃ apne artha ke jñāna kī sāmarthya hī śakti hai. ... pada-jñāna maiṃ padārtha kī smṛti kī śakti hai. jahāṃ pada kā dhvaṃsa huyā hai, tahāṃ bhī pada kā smaraṇa-rūpa jñāna hai. jahāṃ vartamāna pada hai, tahāṃ pada kā śravaṇa-sākṣātkāra jñāna hai.*

³³² *gaṅgāyām ghoṣaḥ*, a stock example.

when there is an allusion to the implied meaning. For example, when a person tells his friend who is going for a meal to an enemy's house, "Eat poison!"³³³ since poison as directly signified is not fit for consumption, the intended meaning is allusive: "Do not eat [at an enemy's house]." Nyāya texts typically also subsume allusive implication under indirect signification.³³⁴

On the basis of the relation between the literal (*śakya*) and implied (*lakṣya*) meanings, implication (*lakṣaṇā*) is of two kinds. 1) Bare implication (*kevala-lakṣaṇā*) occurs when the implied meaning is directly connected to the literal meaning, as in the case of "bank" and "river." 2) Indirect or double implication (*lakṣita-lakṣaṇā*) occurs when the implied meaning is indirectly connected to the literal meaning. Here, the example is "*dvirepho rauti*, the two-repha-ed one buzzes." *Repha* denotes the Sanskrit consonant "ra" and "two-repha" directly signifies two "ra" consonants, but indirectly signifies the word "*bhramara*," Sanskrit for "bee," which in turn signifies the honey-making insect.³³⁵

Implication can also be classified into three types, depending upon the extent to which the literal meaning (*śakya*) of the word is retained or given up in the implied meaning (*lakṣya*). 1) Exclusive implication (*jahal-lakṣaṇā*) occurs when the literal meaning is given up and the implied meaning is considered instead. This is the case in examples like "The village is on the river," and "Eat poison." 2) Inclusive implication (*ajahal-lakṣaṇā*) occurs when the literal meaning as well as the implied meaning are intended, as in the example "Protect the curds from the crows."³³⁶ The speaker's intent is the protection of the meal; hence, cats and other creatures that may ruin the curds are also implied by the term "crows." Or, in the sentence, "The parasol-bearers come,"³³⁷ the term "parasol-bearers" also implies the parasols that are being carried. 3) Both inclusive and exclusive implication (*bhāga-tyāga-lakṣaṇā*)³³⁸ occurs when a part of the literal meaning is preserved while the rest is given up.

³³³ *viṣaṃ bhuṃkṣva*.

³³⁴ *VP* 3.10, 61-2. Examples of allusive signification have been discussed by Mammaṭa (2002), Govindabhaṭṭa (a.k.a. Govindaṭhakkura) (1982) and others in texts on poetics. Discussion on whether it is appropriate to subsume allusive signification under indirect signification has been skipped here. Nīscaldās merely presents an argument in favor since it does not impact the Advaita end (*siddhānta*, 62).

³³⁵ Another stock example for *lakṣita-lakṣaṇā* is the one seen earlier as an example of attributive signification: "*simho devadattaḥ*, Devadatta is [as brave as] a lion." See *VP* 3.8, 55-61 for a more complex discussion on this issue.

³³⁶ *kākebhya dadhi rakṣyatām*.

³³⁷ *chatrīṇo yānti*.

³³⁸ Another term for this is *jahal-ajahal-lakṣaṇā*.

In the sentence, “This is that Devadatta,”³³⁹ the word “that” indicates a non-proximate entity, while “this” indicates a proximate entity. Since they are in grammatical apposition and the identity of proximity and non-proximity is not possible, one has to give up the proximate meaning of “this” and the non-proximate meaning of “that” while preserving the “entity” meaning, to get the intended identity, namely, that both words refer to the same person, Devadatta.

Each of these three forms of implication can be further sub-divided. 1) Productive implication (*prayojanavatī lakṣaṇā*) refers to cases in which the implied meaning (*lakṣya*) is more fruitful than the literal meaning. The sentence, “The village is on the bank” lacks the sense of the bank being cool, holy, etc. conveyed by the sentence, “The village is on the Ganga.” 2) Conventional implication (*nirūḍha-lakṣaṇā*) refers to cases in which the literal meaning is not used but a secondary meaning, which is known to all, is accepted.³⁴⁰ In the sentence, “The pot is blue,” the literal meaning of “blue,” is the color blue, but secondarily it also implies the substance possessing that color. The literal meaning is forsaken in favor of the implied meaning which is understood conventionally, i.e., the pot is blue-color-possessing.³⁴¹

There are two types of verbal cognition (*śābdī pramā*): 1) empirical (*vyāvahārika*); and 2) absolute (*pāramārthika*). Empirical verbal cognition is further sub-divided into two types: 1a) produced by worldly sentences (*laukika-vākya-janya*); and 1b) produced by Vedic sentences (*vaidika-vākya-janya*) (*VP* 3.1, 45). Vedic sentences are also of two types: 1b.1) those teaching about empirical meanings; and 1b.2) those teaching about the absolute reality, Brahman (*VP* 3.5, 52). According to Nīścaldās, all Vedānta statements explain Brahman which is neither to be sought nor avoided, and do not explain meanings subordinate to Vedic prescriptions and prohibitions (*VP* 3.16, 78).³⁴² Sentences that teach about Brahman

³³⁹ *so 'yam devadattaḥ.*

³⁴⁰ “*nirūḍhatvaṃ nāma prayoga-prācuryaṇ mukhyavad bhānam*, Conventionality is the perception [of a secondary sense of a word] as primary due to currency of usage.” Amalānanda Sarasvatī's *Kalpataru* sub-comm. to *BS Bhāmatī* (Śaṅkarācārya and Sastri 1938, 13).

³⁴¹ Nīścaldās also mentions in passing Arbitrary Implication (*aicchika lakṣaṇā*) where there is the use of a word according to the author's desire, contrary to the literal or conventional meanings. Texts on poetics do not mention this form of implication but Gadādhara Bhaṭṭācārya and others have considered it. Their mention of arbitrary implication is only to state its possibility, but should not be interpreted as approval. Its use is frowned on by all. Mammāṭa and others write about this and many other forms of implication, but these are not described in any Vedānta texts as they are not considered useful to a seeker (*jijñāsu*) (*VP* 3.11, 65-6).

³⁴² *sakala vedānta-vākya aheya anupādeya brahma ke bodhaka haiṃ, vidhiśeṣa artha ke bodhaka nahīṃ.*

are further subdivided into two categories: 1) “great sayings” (*mahā-vākya*) such as “*tat tvam asi*, you are that (CU 6.8.7),” which explain the identity between the words “you” and “that;”³⁴³ and 2) subsidiary statements (*avāntara-vākya*), which pertain to the meaning of either the word “that (*tat*)” [Brahman], or to the word “you (*tvam*),” for example, “*satyaṃ jñānam anantaṃ brahma*, Brahman is truth, knowledge and infinite (TU 2.1.1)” explains the word “that” and “*ya eṣa hr̥dy antarjyotiḥ puruṣaḥ*, the person is the inner light within the heart (BU 4.3.7)” explains the word “you.”

Nīścaldās uses these various forms of implication to describe the comprehension of the great sayings (*mahā-vākya*). For example, he holds that only the third type, both inclusive and exclusive implication (*bhāga-tyāga-lakṣaṇā*) applies. He elaborates on this further in VS 6.433-8, 269-72: In the *mahā-vākya* context, the literal meaning of “that (*tat*)” is that which is all-powerful, all-knowing, pervasive, the inciter (*preraka*) of all, independent, indirect (*parokṣa*), possessor of *māyā* [the indeterminate and ultimately unreal creative power that manifests the empirical world, a term that will be left untranslated], free from bondage and liberation. The literal meaning of “you (*tvam*)” is that which has the opposite of all the stated properties of Īśvara, namely, *jīva*-consciousness with little power, little knowledge, delimited, not Īśvara, dependent on karma, deluded by ignorance, having bondage and liberation, directly perceived. Since the literal meanings of *tat* and *tvam* are in direct opposition, the need arises for implication (*lakṣaṇā*) to resolve their apposition. However, in understanding *mahā-vākyas*, neither exclusive (*jahat*) nor inclusive (*ajahat*) implication alone is appropriate. The sole object of knowledge of all of Vedānta is the witness-consciousness, i.e., Brahman-consciousness, which pervades the literal sense (*vācya*), of *tvam* and *tat* respectively, and, if these are excluded through exclusive implication (*jahal-lakṣaṇā*), what is other than consciousness is unreal, inert, etc., and will not establish liberation. Inclusive implication (*ajahal-lakṣaṇā*) is also not applicable here because the literal meanings [of *tat* and *tvam*] are in opposition, and, if nothing is given up, the opposition remains. Hence, through both inclusive and exclusive implication (*bhāga-tyāga-lakṣaṇā*), the opposing qualities of *jīva* and Īśvara are excluded, resulting in the identity of

³⁴³ There are four Great Sayings, *mahā-vākyas*, one from each of the Vedas: 1) *prajñānam brahma*, Consciousness is Brahman (AiU 3.1.1, RV), 2) *aḥaṃ brahmāsmi*, I am Brahman (BU 1.4.10, YajV), 3) *tat tvam asi*, You are that (CU 6.8.7, SV) and 4) *ayam ātmā brahma*, This Self is Brahman (MāU 2, AV). All express the identity of *ātmā* and Brahman.

the pure, unattached consciousness. Further, the verbal cognition of the *mahā-vākyas* occurs through bare implication (*kevala-lakṣaṇā*), as there is a direct relation between the literal meaning and the implied meaning, namely, consciousness. Such verbal cognition of the *mahā-vākyas* is also conventional implication (*nirūḍha-lakṣaṇā*), because it is the eternal intent of Īśvara that seekers get to know the impartite Brahman through the *mahā-vākyas*³⁴⁴ (*VP* 3.13, 68).³⁴⁵

The intent (*tātparya*) of Vedic statements is determined in relation to six characteristics (*ṣaḍ-liṅga*): 1) the consistency of the introduction and conclusion (*upakrama upasaṃhāra kī ekarūpatā*); 2) repetition (*abhyāsa*); 3) originality (*apūrvatā*); 4) result (*phala*); 5) praise (*arthavāda*); and 6) demonstration (*upapatti*).³⁴⁶ Nīścaldās uses *CU* 6 as an example to further explain these characteristics. 1) The introduction (*CU* 6.2.1) states, “In the beginning, son, there was only being, one alone, without a second,”³⁴⁷ and the conclusion states, “All this has that as the self. That is truth. That is the self. You are that, Śvetaketu.”³⁴⁸ Both the introduction and the conclusion consistently state the same point regarding non-dual Brahman. 2) The *CU* 6 passage repeats “You are that” nine times, to reinforce the non-duality of Brahman. 3) Originality is that which cannot be known by any other means, and Brahman is not the object of any means of cognition other than the verbal testimony of the Upaniṣads. 4) The result is the cessation of sorrow and delusion along with the root knowledge of Brahman. 5) Praise of the knowledge of Brahman is clear in the Upaniṣads.³⁴⁹ 6) Demonstration is the use of reasoning (*yukti*) to support the stated goal. *CU* 6 is full of many examples and analogies which demonstrate the identity of the cause and effect. Thus, the intent of Vedānta statements is non-dual Brahman, and the knowledge of the meaning of these words is reached through verbal testimony (*VP* 3.17, 79-80).

³⁴⁴ It is typical of Advaita metaphysics to hold that the Vedas are without human authorship, that they are without beginning and infallible. If an author has to be ascribed, it is Īśvara, the omniscient creator, who is just Brahman personified by the creative powers due to the collective ignorance of all beings. The Upaniṣads are a part of the Vedas, literally the end of the Vedas or Vedānta, and the *mahā-vākyas* are from the Upaniṣads.

³⁴⁵ *VP* 3.13-16, 68-79 deal with refutation of various challenges to the presented view of *mahā-vākya* implication, including criticisms of the *Vedānta-paribhāṣā* position, the Mīmāṃsā & Nyāya views, and of the ancient commentators (*prācīna vṛttikāra*, traditionally understood to be Bhartṛprapañca, Bhāskara and other pre-Śaṅkara commentators).

³⁴⁶ This is succinctly stated in a verse quoted in *Vedānta-sāra* 184: *upakramopasaṃhārāv-abhyāso 'pūrvatā-phalam; arthavādupapattī ca liṅgaṃ tātparyanirṇaye* (Sadānanda 1974, 105).

³⁴⁷ *CU* 6.2.1: *sad eva somyedam agra āsīd ekam evādvitīyam*.

³⁴⁸ *CU* 6.16.3: *etadātmīyam idaṃ sarvaṃ. tat satyam. sa ātmā. tattvaṃ asi śvetaketu iti*.

³⁴⁹ An example (not stated by Nīścaldās) would be *CU* 6.1.3: “*uta tam ādeśam aprākṣyo yenāśrutam śrutam bhavaty amataṃ mataṃ aviññātam vijñātam iti*. Surely you must have asked about the teaching by which what was unheard of becomes heard, what was unthought of becomes thought of, what was unknown becomes known.”

There are four accessories (*sahakārī*) to verbal cognition. 1) Expectancy (*ākāṅkṣā*) is the property of a word, when heard, to arouse the expectation of another word to follow it. In the sentence, “*ayam eti putro rājñah puruṣo pasaryatām*, literally: <this> <comes> <the son> <of the king> <man> <remove>”, once one hears the word “*rājñah* (of the king)” follow “son,” there is no longer an expectancy for any other word to follow, so one does not associate the genitive “*rājñah* (of the king)” with the following word to subsequently form “remove the king’s man,” but instead understands, “remove the man.”³⁵⁰ 2) Compatibility (*yogyatā*) is relation between the meanings of two words so as to provide verbal cognition. In the sentence “He sprinkles with fire, *vahninā siñcati*) there is an incompatibility between the act of sprinkling and fire, and hence no verbal cognition arises. 3) Intention (*tātparya*) is the intent of the utterer. The sentence “*saindhava ānaya*, bring *saindhava*” is ambiguous, as the word *saindhava* can mean either “salt,” that which is derived from the sea, *sindhu*, or “horse,” a particular breed found in the Sindh region, and as a result the intent of the speaker cannot be divined. But, if the sentence were to be uttered at the time of a meal, it would be understood to mean “salt,” and if uttered at the time of departure, then “horse” would be intended.³⁵¹ 4) Proximity (*āsatti*) is typically defined by Nyāya as the contiguity of the words, but Nīścaldās provides a revised definition: proximity is the memory of the uninterrupted meanings of words in relation to the signification (*vṛtti*) of the compatible (*yogya*) words. Thus, the cause of verbal cognition is the knowledge of the expectancy (*ākāṅkṣā-jñāna*), compatibility (*yogyatā-jñāna*), and intention (*tātparya-jñāna*) of the words, as well as their inherent proximity (*āsatti-svarūpa*). The four are collectively called the apparatus for verbal cognition (*śabda-sāmagrī*).

Next, Nīścaldās takes up the case of the potential conflict between two means of cognition, such as perception (*pratyakṣa*) and verbal testimony (*śabda*). It is accepted that two cognitions pertaining to the same object or cognizer (*samānādhikaraṇa*³⁵²) cannot occur

³⁵⁰ The example that Nīścaldās provides here is different from the typical one usually supplied in this context: When one hears the word “bring (*ānaya*)” the expectancy is aroused as to “bring what?”, which can be satisfied by the word “cow (*gām*).”

³⁵¹ Nīścaldās raises the doubts as to whether a parrot’s utterance can have intention, or the Vedas which are eternal and without author, particularly for the Mīmāṃsakas whose metaphysics does not accept Īśvara, or verses composed by a silent sage (*maunī*). He disagrees with the views of Nāgojī Bhaṭṭa’s (1670-1750) [*Vaiyākaraṇā-siddhānta-laghu-*] *Mañjūṣā*, (1925), Prakāśātman’s (11th c.) *Vivaraṇa* (Padmapāḍācārya et al. 1985), Dharmarāja’s (1550-1650) *Vedānta-paribhāṣā* (Adhvarīndra 1972) and others on these matters. These discussions have not been presented here (VP 3.18, 81-84).

³⁵² *samānādhikaraṇa* is defined as [multiple] *vṛttis* in one *adhikaraṇa*, substratum (VP3.20, 89).

at the same instant. Where the eyes perceive a pot on the ground at the same time that the sentence “the ground is pot-possessing, *ghaṭavad bhūtaḥ*,” is heard, the stronger means of cognition will win out, which in this case is perception. But in the case where, just as the eyes are perceiving the pot on the ground, one hears the sentence, “A son has been born to you, *putras te jātaḥ*,” the pot is not cognized in that instance, but instead the knowledge of the son’s birth occurs since the verbal cognitive apparatus is dominant. The desire to know (*jijñāsā*) is what sways the balance. Where there is the desire to know both objects, the cognitive apparatus for the object which is more greatly desired to be known (*utkaṭa-jijñāsita*) will be dominant. The desire to know worldly things (*laukika padārtha*) and the apparatus for their cognition is always possible in the waking state, and such worldly things will be cognized, because, in the absence of a desire to know Brahman, the apparatus for the knowledge of Brahman will be obstructed. Therefore, to obstruct the apparatus of the cognition of worldly things, such as perception and the rest, one needs a greater desire to know Brahman. This indeed is the intent (*tātparya*) of *BS* 1.1.1, “*athāto brahma jijñāsā*, Thereafter, therefore, the desire to know Brahman.” Nīscaldās suggests that although the implied sense (*lakṣaṇā*) of the term “desire to know (*jijñāsā*)” suggests that the contemplation of the meaning of the Vedas is to be performed, the literal meaning (*vācyārtha*) of the term is that the desire to know Brahman is the cause of the knowledge of Brahman, and that is the preferred meaning (*VP* 3.19, 86-7).³⁵³

Nīscaldās holds that the intent (*tātparya*) of the Vedānta statements is not injunctions for meditation or worship (*upāsanā-vidhi*)³⁵⁴ but rather the knowledge of non-dual Brahman, as is conveyed by the six characteristics (*ṣaḍ-linga*) described earlier.³⁵⁵ The Mīmāṃsakas hold that the Vedas are eternal and without author; hence, they cannot function as the object of intent. The Naiyāyikas hold that the Vedas are authored by humans (*pauruṣeya*) and therefore finite and transient (*kṣaṇika*), being only a collection of syllables (*varṇa-*

³⁵³ Nīscaldās explains that the same word cannot convey the knowledge of both the literal and implied meanings in a sentence, as in the example, “The fish and the village of the cow herders is on/in the Ganga, *gaṅgāyāṃ mīna-ghoṣau*.” He further suggests that multiple meanings of an aphorism (*sūtra*) are its adornment (*bhūṣaṇa*), and hence multiple authors have provided multiple interpretations. However, he elects to not examine whether the term *jijñāsā* can alternately also imply the sense of an injunction (*vidhi*), to avoid further protractedness of this [*VP*] text (*grantha kī vṛddhi*, *VP* 3.19, 87-8).

³⁵⁴ The Mīmāṃsaka viewpoint is that all Vedic statements are either injunctions for acts (*vidhi*), statements further explaining the injunctions (*artha-vāda*), or declarative statements (*mantra*). Thus, they consider the Upaniṣad statements as injunctions for meditation/contemplation/worship (*upāsanā*).

³⁵⁵ To back this assertion, Nīscaldās refers to *BS ŚBh* 1.1.4, the *samanvaya-sūtra*, which states that Brahman is the purport of the Upaniṣads.

samudāya), sounds which last for only two instants before perishing in the third. After presenting the Nyāya position at considerable length (*VP* 3.20, 88-91), Nīścaldās gives the Vedānta view that the Vedas are not eternal, because revealed scripture (*śruti*) itself has described its creation.³⁵⁶ According to Vedānta, everything other than consciousness (*cetana*) is not eternal (*anitya*), including the Vedas. But the Vedas are not transient, because they are created by Īśvara via a mere intention (*saṃkalpa*) at the beginning of creation,³⁵⁷ as effortlessly as breathing. Similar to the Nyāya view, the Vedas and the *Mahābhārata*, etc., can be considered humanly authored, however, in Vedānta, Vyāsa [author of the *Mahābhārata*] and the others are omniscient. Further, Īśvara recalls the Vedas and reproduces them faithfully from creation to creation, whereas Vyāsa and the other authors create their works according to their desire in each creation, and these created works are not necessarily identical to those of a prior creation. Thus, the Vedas, being a creation of Īśvara, can have an intent, which is reproduced faithfully and eternally, from creation to creation, and this intent is the knowledge of Brahman (*VP* 3.20, 88-92).

5.4.4 Analogy (*Upamāna*)

Typically, verbal cognition is treated after analogy, but Nīścaldās presents the means of cognition in the order of their acceptance by the most systems. Since verbal cognition is accepted by Sāṅkhya, but analogy is not, analogy is given fourth place after verbal cognition in Nīścaldās's listing. According to Nyāya, analogical cognition (*upamiti*) is the knowledge of the word's literal meaning as denoted by a particular object.³⁵⁸ The typical example is: When one hears the word "*gavaya*,"³⁵⁹ but does not know what it means and is told by another that a *gavaya* resembles a cow, at a later time on seeing an animal resembling a cow and recalling the earlier description, one concludes, "This is a *gavaya*." There are differences between the old (*prācīna*) and new (*navya*) Naiyāyikas, as to the means (*karaṇa*) and

³⁵⁶ The origin of the Vedas is described in the *puruṣa-sūkta*, Hymn to the Cosmic Person, *RV* 10.90.9: "*tasmād yajñāt sarvahuta ṛcaḥ sāmāni jajñire; chandāṃsi jajñire tasmād yajus tasmād ajāyata*. From that [sacrifice of the Cosmic Person] arose the Ṛg and Sāma verses, the [Vedic] meters and Yajus [sacrificial] formulae." John Muir gives other descriptions of the origin of the Vedas in the *AV*, the *Brāhmaṇas* and the Upaniṣads (1967, 3-5).

³⁵⁷ The Hindu view is that creation (*śṛṣṭi*) is cyclic, followed by a period of sustainment (*sthiti*) then dissolution (*laya*), only to repeat indefinitely.

³⁵⁸ *saṃjñā meṃ saṃjñā kī vācyatā kā jñāna upamiti kahiye hai* (*VP* 4.1, 92). Another way of describing this: "*saṃjñā-saṃjñi-sambandha-jñānam upamiti, upamiti is the knowledge of the meaning relation between a word and the thing denoted by it*" (*TS* 58).

³⁵⁹ A *gavaya* is a species of ox, *bos gavaeus* (*MW*, s.v.). It is a wild species, similar to a cow, but lacking a dewlap.

intermediate cause or mediate activity (*vyāpāra*) of analogical cognition, which we will not go into here. Knowledge through analogy can also occur through knowledge of dissimilarity (*vaidharmya*).

Analogy is understood differently in Vedānta. When one sees a *gavaya*, the perceptual cognition arises, “This animal is like a cow,” subsequent to which arises the cognition, “My cow is similar to this animal.” The cognition of similarity in the cow to the *gavaya*, born of the cognition of similarity between the *gavaya* and the cow, is termed analogical cognition (*upamiti*). There is no mediate activity (*vyāpāra*) involved here. Analogical cognition through the knowledge of dissimilarity is not traditionally accepted.

In an earlier work (*VS* 4.194, 107), Nīścaldās had presented analogical cognition along the lines of Nyāya, because it does not conflict with the Vedānta perspective. In fact, Nīścaldās proposes that it provides examples that support the accepted doctrine (*siddhānta*). When one asks, “What is the meaning of the word ‘*ātmā*’” after receiving the teacher’s answer, “*ātmā* is different from the body, etc. (*dehādi-vaidharmyavān ātmā*),” one subsequently reflects in solitude and arrives at the analogical cognition that the literal meaning (*vācya*) of the word ‘*ātmā*’ is that which is different from the transient, impure body that is suffering: it is eternal, pure, the nature of happiness. If one accepts the Vedānta definition, a seeker (*jijñāsu*) will find no favorable examples, given that there is nothing similar to *ātmā*. It might be argued that an analogy based on similarity which is helpful for a seeker is possible: “*Ātmā* is similar to space (*ākāśa*), unattached, etc.” However, the most advanced seeker (*uttama jijñāsu*) will eventually arrive at the firm conclusion that the entire creation, including space is like a mirage,³⁶⁰ momentarily seen and then it vanishes (*dr̥ṣṭa-naṣṭa-svabhāva*), and hence *ātmā* is different from it all. Such a seeker will not find a favorable analogical example. Therefore, a better definition of analogical cognition is that which arises from the cognition of either similarity or dissimilarity.³⁶¹ Thus, analogy (*upamāna*) is the cognition of dissimilarity in the empirical world (*prapañca*) from Brahman, and its result is the analogical cognition (*upamiti*), that Brahman is dissimilar to the creation.

³⁶⁰ Lit. *gandharva-nagara*, an imaginary city in the sky.

³⁶¹ Nīścaldās goes on to defend his definition of analogical cognition and take the author of *Vedānta-paribhāṣā*, Dharmarāja Adhvarīndra (1550-1650 CE) and his son Rāmakṛṣṇa Dīkṣita (1625-1700 CE, author of *Śikhāmaṇi* commentary on *Vedānta-paribhāṣā*) (Thangaswami 1980, 279, 380), respectively, to task for inconsistencies in their position in this regard (*VP* 4.5, 96-8). This is followed by a discussion on the technical differences (*pāribhāṣika bheda*) in the Nyāya and Vedānta definitions of analogical cognition, and further faults in the *Vedānta-paribhāṣā* commentary (*VP* 4.6, 98-100).

5.4.5 Postulation (*Arthāpatti*)

Unlike the prior four means of cognition, Nyāya does not accept postulation (*arthāpatti*)³⁶² as an independent means of cognition, but instead considers it an inference of the negative (*vyatirekin*) type. Nyāya classifies inferences into three types. 1) An inference for which an example of concurrence of the probandum (*sādhya*) and the probans (*hetu*) is not available; instead only negative examples of the concurrence of the absence of the probans and the absence of the probandum are available. Such an inference is called a purely negative (*kevala-vyatirekin*) inference; for example, “Of the five elements,³⁶³ none that is not different from the other elements has odor; earth has odor, and hence it is different from the other elements.”³⁶⁴ This inference has no positive example other than earth that satisfies it. 2) An inference for which a negative example of concurrence of the absence of the probandum and the absence of the probans is not available; instead only positive examples of the concurrence of the probans and the probandum are available. Such an inference is called a purely positive (*kevalānvayin*) inference; for example, “Any object that is knowable has a name; a pot is knowable, hence it is nameable.”³⁶⁵ This inference has no negative example that is both unnamable and unknowable. 3) An inference where both positive and negative examples are available is called a positive and negative (*anvaya-vyatireka*) inference; for example, “Where there is fire, there is smoke; there is smoke on the mountain, and hence the mountain has fire.”³⁶⁶ A positive example is a kitchen, while a negative example is a lake.

Vedānta accepts only the third, positive and negative (*anvaya-vyatireka*) type as inference proper. Purely positive (*kevalānvayin*) inferences are not possible in Vedānta because there is an absence of everything in Brahman. Purely negative (*kevala-vyatirekin*) inferences based on the invariable concomitance of absences do not really qualify as inference; they form the separate means of cognition, namely, postulation (*arthāpatti*). However, Nīscaldās suggests that cognition can arise either by purely negative inference or through postulation, depending upon the manner in which the reflexive cognition

³⁶² Also rendered as “implication,” “supposition,” or “presumption.”

³⁶³ Space, air, fire, water, earth (*ākāśa, vāyu, agni, āpaḥ, pṛthivī*).

³⁶⁴ *pṛthivī itara-bhedavatī gandhatvāt.*

³⁶⁵ *ghaṭaḥ pada-śaktimān jñeyatvāt.*

³⁶⁶ *parvato vahnimān dhūmāt.*

(*anuvyavasāya*) occurs.³⁶⁷ With regard to the above example regarding earth being different from the other elements because it possesses odor, the reflexive cognition can be either “Due to the earth’s property of odor, I infer that earth is different from the other elements,”³⁶⁸ or “Due to the inapplicability of the property of odor [to the other elements], I postulate that earth is different from these elements.”³⁶⁹

The term postulation (*arthāpatti*) denotes both the means (*pramāṇa*) and the cognition (*pramā*). The means of postulation (*arthāpatti pramāṇa*) is the cognition of that which is to be explained (*upapādyā*), it (the means of postulation) is the cause of the explaining hypothesis (*upapādaka kalpanā*); the cognition via postulation (*arthāpatti pramā*) is the cognition of the explanation (*upapādaka*).³⁷⁰ For example, in the case of a person who does not eat during the day, yet grows fatter, this condition is not possible unless he is eating at night. His fatness is the phenomenon to be explained (*upapādyā*), and that without which it (the *upapādyā*) would not exist is its explanation (*upapādaka*), namely, eating at night.

Here Nīścaldās raises a doubt that postulation as defined above is not different from inference. As presented, the probandum (*vyāpaka*) has the property of being the explanation (*upapādakatā*), and the probans (*vyāpya*) has the property of having to be explained (*upapādyatā*). By the definition of the postulation as means, the cognition of the probans is the cause of the cognition of the probandum. This is precisely the definition of inference, and hence they would be identical. In reply, Nīścaldās states that when the two cognitions, namely, 1) fatness is the probans (*vyāpya*) of eating at night, and 2) Devadatta possesses the property of fatness, occur together, when the cognition of eating at night occurs, this cognition is inferential: “On account of fatness, I infer [the fact of] eating at night.”³⁷¹ But when the cognition of eating at night occurs subsequent to the cognition that for a person who does not eat during the day, fatness is unproven (*anupapatti*) unless he eats at night, and it is a postulation cognition: “Due to the lack of proof of fatness, I postulate eating at night.”³⁷² Thus, the postulation of an explanation by the cognition of the lack of proof of that

³⁶⁷ Here, Nīścaldās appears to be agreeing with the views of Rāmakṣṣṇa Dīkṣita, the author of the *Vedānta-paribhāṣā* commentary, *Śikhāmaṇi* (Dharmarājādharīndra, Rāmakṣṇādharīndra, and Amaradāsa 2000, 342-3; Datta 1990, 187-8).

³⁶⁸ *gandhena itara-bhedam prthivyām anuminomi* (VP 5.2, 105).

³⁶⁹ *gandhānupapattya itara-bhedam prthivyām anuminomi* (VP 5.2, 105).

³⁷⁰ Nīścaldās provides that *saṃpādaka* and *saṃpādyā* are synonyms of *upapādaka* and *upapādyā* (VP 5.3, 105).

³⁷¹ *sthaulyena rātri-bhojanam anuminomi* (VP 5.3, 106).

³⁷² *sthūlatānupattiyā rātri-bhojanam kalpayāmi* (VP 5.3, 106).

which is to be explained is called the cognition via postulation, and its cause, the lack of proof of that which is to be explained, is called the means of postulation.³⁷³

Postulation is of two types: 1) postulation from what is seen (*dr̥ṣṭārthāpatti*); and 2) postulation from what is heard (*śrutārthāpatti*). The cognition of eating at night for one who grows fatter yet does not eat during the day is postulation from the seen, since the fatness is perceived. When the explanation is conceived by the cognition of the lack of proof of that which is heard and needs to be explained, it is termed postulation from the heard. On hearing the sentence, “Devadatta who is not at home is alive,”³⁷⁴ one conceives of Devadatta’s existence as being external to the house on the basis of the lack of proof of Devadatta’s being alive while not being at home. Postulation from the heard is further subdivided as 2a) lack of the verbal expression (*abhīdhānānupapatti*), and 2b) lack of something implied (*abhihitānānupapatti*). On hearing the word “[the] door” uttered, there is a lack of an additional word “shut” which has to be supplied (*adhyāhāra*) to the intent of the speaker by a logical connection (*anvaya*); this is termed “lack of the verbal expression.” When the entire sentence being heard is without meaning unless additional meaning is supplied, this is termed “lack of something implied.” When one hears the Vedic injunction, “One who is desirous of heaven should perform sacrifice,” this phrase lacks meaning without conceiving of the concept of “the unseen potency of one’s deeds” (*apūrvā*). Since the sacrifice cannot effect attainment of heaven immediately when it is performed, the unseen potency has to be postulated.

Postulation is useful³⁷⁵ for understanding the meaning of Upaniṣadic statements such as “*tarati śokam ātmavit*, one who knows the *ātmā* transcends sorrow” (*CU* 7.1.3). The cessation of sorrow through knowledge is heard, but there is no implied “illusoriness of sorrow” (*śoka-mithyātva*). The illusoriness of sorrow is the explanation (*upapādaka*); the cessation of sorrow through knowledge is that which is to be explained (*upapādyā*). This is

³⁷³ The term *arthāpatti*, in the case of *arthāpatti-pramā* is explained as a genitive *tatpuruṣa* compound, “*arthasya āpatti*,” the *āpatti*=*kalpanā*, conception, of the *artha*=*upapādaka*, the explanation. In the case of *arthāpatti-pramāṇa*, it is explained as a *bahuvrīhi* compound, “*arthasya āpattir yasmāt*,” that due to which the conception of the explanation [occurs], i.e., the cognition of the lack of proof of that which is to be explained.

³⁷⁴ *grhe’sat devadatto jīvati* (*VP* 5.3, 106). The text has been emended from *asan* to *asat* per Nīśchaladāsa (1868, 5.3).

³⁷⁵ Postulation (*arthāpatti*) also is very useful in Advaita for explaining experienced events, and in supposing unperceived principles to explain the empirical world, such as the six things without beginning [1) *jīva*; 2) *Īśvara*; 3) pure consciousness; 4) *māyā*; 5) the difference between *jīva* and *Īśvara*; and, 6) the relation between *māyā* and pure consciousness], the power (*śakti*) possessed by objects that explains their efficacy, the law of karma and the existence of *Īśvara* for apportioning the results of karma (Datta 1990, 206).

an explanation of postulation from what is heard. In the case of the identity of *jīva* and Brahman as found in the Great Sayings (*mahā-vākya*), such identity would be possible only if the difference were at the level of conditioning by the “limiting adjuncts”³⁷⁶ (*aupādhika bheda*). Therefore, the cognition of the difference being at the level of conditioning by the limiting adjuncts caused by the lack of proof (*anupapatti*) of the identity of *jīva* and Brahman is produced by the means of postulation. The identity of *jīva* and Brahman is perceptible to a wise person but only heard of by all others, so in this case it is an example of both postulation from what is seen and from what is heard. In the case of mother-of-pearl mistaken as silver, the negation of silver is perceptible but is not possible without the illusoriness of silver. Thus, the illusoriness of silver is conceived of from the lack of a proof of the negation; this is an example of postulation from the seen. After the mind is stilled (*vilaya*) during non-conceptual one-pointedness (*nirvikalpa samādhi*), only non-dual Brahman remains, and there is the absence of all experience of non-*ātmā* objects. This absence is only possible if the non-*ātmā* objects are mental constructs which cease when the mind is stilled. Therefore, due to the lack of any proof for the absence of all duality upon the stilling of the mind, the conception arises that all duality is merely a mental construct. Here, the means of postulation is the cognition of what is to be explained (*upapādyā*), namely, that all duality ceases on the stilling of the mind. The cognition via postulation is the cognition of the explanation (*upapādaka*), namely, that all duality is a mental construct.³⁷⁷

5.4.6 Non-cognition (*Anupalabdhi*)

Non-cognition (*anupalabdhi*) receives by far the most detailed treatment of all the means of cognition in *VP*, with much attention to presenting and refuting the Nyāya perspective. The KS edition devotes 87 pages to non-cognition (*VP* 6) as compared to 47 pages to verbal testimony (*VP* 3) and 57 pages collectively to the remaining four means of cognition (*VP* 1-2, 5-6).³⁷⁸ In this section, first Nīścaldās presents the Nyāya view of non-existence, and then criticizes it. He next presents the six items that Vedānta considers to be without beginning, all of which except consciousness are negatable by knowledge; he defends the position that

³⁷⁶ See the discussion of *upādhi* on p. 164.

³⁷⁷ Here, although the means (*arthāpatti-pramāṇa*) effect the cognition (*arthāpatti-pramā*) without any intermediate activity (*nirvyāpāra*), the instrumentality (*karaṇatā*) of the cognition (*pramā*) is possible, as discussed under the section on the means of analogy (*VP* 4.6, 98-101, not reproduced in the current treatment of *pramāṇa*).

³⁷⁸ See also section 5.4.3, p. 114 and n. 326.

jīva and Īśvara are without beginning. Non-cognition is required as a distinct means of cognition since otherwise absence is not perceptible by the senses; the sense can only perceive that which is present. Nīścaldās refutes the immediacy of the knowledge of absence resulting from non-cognition, and defends non-cognition against the Nyāya objection of lack of economy. Lastly, Nīścaldās's view of the utility of non-cognition for a seeker of liberation is presented.

Only the Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsakas and the Vedāntins accept non-cognition as a distinct means of cognizing non-existence (*abhāva*). The Naiyāyikas accept non-existence but hold that the non-existent object (*pratiyogin*) is cognized by perception of its locus (*anuyogin*), which is then qualified by the absence of the non-existent object.³⁷⁹ In old Nyāya, non-existence is defined as the object of non-apprehension,³⁸⁰ whereas for Navya Nyāya it is the object of apprehension dependent upon the apprehension of its non-existent object.³⁸¹ In Nyāya, non-existence is of two kinds. 1) Mutual or reciprocal non-existence (*anyonyābhāva*) is the negation of identity, namely, difference. Reciprocal non-existence is without beginning and end. 2) Relational non-existence (*saṃsargābhāva*) is the absence of a relation between two objects and is further classified into four sub-types: 2a) prior non-existence (*prāgabhāva*), which has an end but no beginning; 2b) posterior or annihilative non-existence (*pradhvaṃsābhāva*), which has a beginning but no end; 2c) temporal non-existence (*sāmayikābhāva*), which has both a beginning and an end; and 2d) absolute non-existence (*atyantābhāva*), which has neither a beginning nor an end, and is different from reciprocal non-existence (1, above). The statement “the cloth does not have the quality of a pot (‘pot-ness’), *paṭe ghaṭatvaṃ na*,” conveys the absolute non-existence of the quality of a pot in the cloth, whereas “the cloth is not the pot, *paṭo ghaṭo na*,” conveys the mutual non-identity of the pot and cloth. The first example has the non-existent object (*pratiyogin*), namely, quality of a pot, and the locus (*anuyogin*), namely, cloth, connected by an inherence relation

³⁷⁹ The term *pratiyogin* is traditionally translated as “counter-correlate,” “adjunct,” “counterpositive,” or “absentee,” and *anuyogin* as “correlate,” “subjunct” depending on whether the relation between the two objects is one of non-existence or of co-existence (Phillips 1995, 315, 319 s.v.; Ingalls 1951, 44, 55-6). I have chosen to leave these terms untranslated rather than substitute specialized and opaque equivalents. In the present context of non-cognition, when a pot is absent on the ground, the absent object (the pot) is the *pratiyogin* to the locus where it is absent, the *anuyogin* (the ground).

³⁸⁰ *niṣedha-mukha pratīti kā viśaya* (VP 6.1, 109).

³⁸¹ *pratiyogī sāpekṣa pratīti kā viśaya* (VP 6.1, 109).

(*samavāya sambandha*) while the second example has the *anuyogin* (cloth) and *pratiyogin* (pot) connected by a negation of an identity relation (*tādātmya sambandha*).³⁸²

The Nyāya view is criticized by Nīścaldās. It is not proper to consider prior non-existence (2a) of, say, a pot, as without beginning since its locus (*anuyogin*), which is the material cause (*upādāna kāraṇa*), itself has a beginning and so does the absentee (*pratiyogin*), the pot. The Naiyāyikas may argue that *māyā*, the material cause of creation, is without beginning, and hence the effects of *māyā* possess prior non-existence. However, the Vedānta view of creation does not require prior non-existence of the direct cause, and moreover *māyā* is not the direct cause (*sākṣāt-kāraṇa*) but only the general cause. In addition, *māyā* is neither existent nor non-existent but logically indefinable (*anirvacanīya*). It is also improper to consider annihilative non-existence (2b) as endless, since the locus of destruction can also be destroyed. For the pot, the potsherds are the locus of its destruction and when the potsherds are destroyed, the pot's non-existence in them also has an end. Further, reciprocal non-existence (1) cannot be without both beginning and end because its locus has a beginning and an end. In the case of the reciprocal non-existence of the pot and cloth, the locus of the pot's non-existence is the cloth, which has both beginning and end. Reciprocal non-existence can be without beginning if its locus is without beginning, but that locus will have an end. There is reciprocal non-existence of *jīva* and Brahman, which is without beginning, but this non-existence comes to an end when there is the cessation of ignorance through the knowledge of Brahman. Vedānta considers only these six items to be without beginning: 1) pure consciousness (*śuddha cetana*); 2) the individual (*jīva*); 3) Īśvara; 4) ignorance (*avidyā*); 5) the relation between ignorance and consciousness; and 6) the reciprocal difference of objects without beginning. Except for pure consciousness, all the rest are considered to be negated by knowledge. Thus, for Vedānta, all non-existence is destructible and non-eternal (*VP* 6.19-21, 148-154).

An opponent might raise the objection that, as per Vedānta, *jīva* and Īśvara are said to be caused by *māyā*, namely, the indeterminate and ultimately unreal creative power that manifests the empirical world, and if they are effects of *māyā*, they cannot be without beginning. Moreover, effects possess the same properties as the cause, and yet *māyā*, claimed

³⁸² *VP* 6.3-5, 112-6; *VP* 6.9, 124-36. I have considerably simplified the discussion.

by Vedānta to have an appearance of existence (*bhāva-rūpa*),³⁸³ would be the opposite of non-existence. Nīścaldās responds that *jīva* and *Īśvara* are not effects of *māyā* but are dependent on *māyā* for their existence. Though *māyā* is said to have an appearance of existence and it is different from non-existence, yet it is the material cause for all non-existence by virtue of possessing the similar properties of logical indefiniteness (*anirvacanīyatva*), illusoriness (*mithyātva*), being negatable through knowledge (*jñāna-nivartyatva*), and not being *ātmā*. For example, even though two pot halves (*kapāla*), as the material cause for the pot, differ from the effect, the pot, by virtue of having the property of being pot halves (*kapālatva*) and not having the pot property (*ghaṭatva*), yet the pot halves and the pot share the properties of “clay-ness” (*mṛṇmayatva*), etc., and still can be cause and effect. Similarly, all non-existence, despite being an effect of *māyā*, shares with *māyā* its properties of logical indefiniteness, illusoriness, and being negatable through knowledge (*VP* 6.21, 154-5).³⁸⁴

Whereas Nyāya considers non-existence as directly perceptible by the senses, Vedānta and the Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsakas view absence as not perceptible by the senses;³⁸⁵ instead, non-cognition (*anupalabdhi*) is a separate means for the cognition of non-existence. The means of cognition (*pramāṇa*) is the suitable non-apprehension (*yogyānupalambha* or *yogyānupalabdhi*) of the non-existent object (*pratiyogin*), namely, were the *pratiyogin* present, it would be directly perceptible. Non-cognition cannot grasp the non-existence of merit (*dharma*) and demerit (*adharma*) because these are not sense-perceptible. There is no intermediate activity (*vyāpāra*) for the means, just as in the case of analogy (*upamāna*) and postulation (*arthāpatti*).

³⁸³ See Kar (2003) for a discussion on *bhāva-rūpa*

³⁸⁴ Nīścaldās also makes passing reference to an unnamed Vedāntin author (*koī granthakāra advaitavādī*) who accepts absolute non-existence only (2d above) and considers all other forms of non-existence improper (*alīka*) and reducible to absolute non-existence (*VP* 6.21, 155). The unnamed personage is Nṛsiṃhāśrama who puts forth this view in his *Bheda-dhik-kāra* (1904, 90-91; Sastri and Mahadevan 1936, 33-4). Elsewhere (*VP* 6.34, 185-7), Nīścaldās criticizes another aspect of the *Bheda-dhik-kāra*, but while considering superimposition in Vedānta, he appears to agree with Nṛsiṃhāśrama’s position that all non-existence is absolute (*VP* 7.13, 229: *sakala padārtha siddhānta maiṃ kalpita haiṃ, tinkā abhāva pāramārthika hai, so brahma-rūpa hai*).

³⁸⁵ The perceptual cognition of existent objects takes place via the *antaḥ-karaṇa*’s *vṛtti* which goes out and assumes the form of the object, whereby the consciousness delimited by the *vṛtti* becomes identical with the consciousness delimited by the object. In the case of non-existent objects, there is nothing for the *vṛtti* to assume the form of, hence the need for a separate means of cognition.

The cognition of non-existence arising from the means of non-cognition is held by Vedānta to be immediate (*pratyakṣa*).³⁸⁶ It is not necessary for a cognition to be sense-generated (i.e., via the means of cognition for perception, *pratyakṣa pramāṇa*) for it to be immediate. When a person hears, “You are the tenth,”³⁸⁷ the cognition that arises through verbal testimony is also immediate. The knowledge of the identity of Brahman and *ātmā* arising from the *mahā-vākyas* is also immediate. The knowledge of Īśvara, though a *vyrtti* of *māyā* and hence not sense-produced, is also immediate. Similarly, the knowledge of non-existence born of non-cognition is immediate, because the locus of the non-existence is suitable for perception. When the senses do not function in the perception of the locus, the knowledge of non-example born of non-cognition is mediate. For example, the knowledge of the absence of size (*mahattva*) in atoms occurs without use of the eyes and is mediate. Nīścaldās suggests that, where the authors of texts such as the *Bheda-dhik-kāra* [Nṛsiṃhāśrama, sixteenth century] and *Vedānta-paribhāṣā* [Dharmarāja Adhvarīndra, 1550-1650 CE] speak of the immediate (*pratyakṣa*) cognition of non-existence, they are engaging in the (temporary) acceptance of their opponents’ view while refuting their objections to one’s own view (*prauḍhi-vāda*).³⁸⁸ When examined carefully, the knowledge of non-existence due to non-cognition is always mediate, according to Nīścaldās. Even when the locus of the non-existence is sense-perceptible, as when the non-existence of the pot on the ground is cognized, the cognition of the ground is immediate, but the cognition of the non-existence is mediate.³⁸⁹

The Naiyāyikas may object that there is a lack of economy (*gaūrava*) in requiring another means for the cognition of non-existence, while their system preserves economy (*lāghava*) by utilizing perception instead. The Advaitin would respond that it is the Nyāya view that

³⁸⁶ Literally, the term *pratyakṣa* means “perceptual” but here Nīścaldās means *aparokṣa*, “immediate” because he contrasts it with *parokṣa*, “mediate,” in the same sentence. (*VP* 6.30, 178: *Vedānta-mata maiṃ pramāṇa anupalabdhi hai au vedānta-matamaiṃ anupalabdhi pramāṇa janya abhāva kā jñāna bhī naiyāyika mata kī nāiṃ pratyakṣa hai parokṣa nahīṃ*).

³⁸⁷ This is a reference to an oft-used story of the tenth person used to illustrate the ignorance of one’s true nature: Ten boys go on an excursion. En route they have to swim across a river. On arriving at the opposite shore, when a count is taken, each forgets to count himself and comes up one short and thinks that one of the group has perished in the crossing. The grief that arises is only dispelled when a wise passer-by instructs the leader, “You are the tenth.” Śaṅkara draws upon this story in *TU ŚBh* 2.1 (1979, 442), *BU ŚBh* 1.4.7 (1986, 73), 1.4.15 (108), with a brief reference to “*saṅkhyā-pūraṇa*, completing the count,” and his *Upadeśa-sāhasrī* 1.12.3, 1.18.170-4, 187, 190, 199 (2006, 2:131n3). See *PD* 7.22-28, 247-250 for another example of how this story is used (Vidyāranya and Swahananda 1967, 242-4, 327-8). For the occurrences of this story as folk tales, see Pahlajrai (2005, 73n49).

³⁸⁸ *VP* 6.35, 191: *prativādī kī ukti mānikai bhī svamata meṃ doṣa kā parihāra karai tākūṃ prauḍhi-vāda kahai haiṃ*.

³⁸⁹ *VP* 6.31-34, 178-87.

lacks economy since it requires sense contact with the imagined attribute of absence in the locus, while also requiring the senses as the means and non-cognition as an auxiliary cause (*sahakārī kāraṇa*).^{390, 391}

The scriptures speak of the non-existence of the empirical world (*prapañca*) in all three times, past, present and future, as in “There is no diversity here at all, *neha nānāsti kiñcana*” (*BU* 4.4.19). Non-cognition is useful to a seeker of liberation (*jijñāsu*) as a means of ascertaining the non-existence of the empirical world from the absolute (*pāramārthika*) standpoint. The nature of the empirical world is cognized, and, if it were absolute in nature, it would be cognized as absent in all three times. But it is not thus cognized; hence, there is the non-existence of the empirical world as absolute. Thus, non-cognition helps a seeker to arrive at the absence of diversity in the empirical world as well as the absolute difference of the empirical world from Brahman (*VP* 6.36, 195-6).

5.5 Causes of a *Vṛtti*

After first defining *vṛtti* and stating that *vṛtti*-cognitions are of two types, valid (*pramā*) and indirect (*apramā*) (*VP* 1.1, 1), Nīścaldās initiated the exploration of the means of valid cognition (*pramāṇa*), just concluded above (section 5.4), to facilitate the understanding of the valid, direct *vṛtti*-cognitions. Nīścaldās now turns to the investigation of indirect cognitions (the second half of Figure 8 on p. 122). The examination of both valid and indirect cognitions is for the purpose of answering the second question, “What is the cause of a *vṛtti*?” and is a step along the journey to ultimately attain the knowledge of Brahman, arrived at by means of a *vṛtti* in the form of Brahman (*brahmākāra vṛtti*).

In this connection, Nīścaldās first provides a discussion of types of causes. Nyāya holds that there are three types of causes: 1) inherent cause (*samavāyī kāraṇa*) which is the same as the material cause (*upādāna kāraṇa*); 2) non-inherent cause (*asamavāyī kāraṇa*);³⁹² and 3) efficient cause (*nimitta kāraṇa*). The Advaita view accepts only two types of causes, material

³⁹⁰ *VP* 6.29-30, 175-8; 6.34-5, 187-8, 194-5.

³⁹¹ Nīścaldās takes issue with the author of the *Śikhāmaṇi* commentary on *Vedānta-paribhāṣā*, Dharmarāja Adhvarīndra’s son Rāmakṣṣṇa Dikṣita, for suggesting, per the Naiyāyikas, that non-cognition is not a separate means of cognition and non-existence is perceived by the senses: *tisakūṃ advaita-śāstra ke saṃskāra nyūna huve haiṃ au nyāya-śāstra ke saṃskāra adhika rahe haiṃ ... vedānta-paribhāṣā kī tīkā maiṃ naiyāyika mata kā ujīvana sakala advaita granthana saiṃ viruddha likhyā hai* (*VP* 6.35, 188-9). The passage in question is Dharmarājādhvarīndra et al. (2000, 358).

³⁹² Nīścaldās defines the non-inherent cause (*asamavāyī kāraṇa*) as “the producer of the effect, which is associated with the inherent cause of the effect. *kārya ke samavāyī-kāraṇa saiṃ sambandhī jo kārya kā janaka*.” The non-inherent cause for cloth is the contact between the threads, that for a pot is the contact between its two halves (*kapāla*) (*VP* 7.1.197).

and efficient. The remaining Nyāya cause, the non-inherent cause, is held to be of no use for knowing non-duality, since it only differentiates between material causalities: for example, the pot is not different from clay. According to Vedānta, the non-inherent cause is a part of the efficient cause. Causes can also be divided into the special cause (*asādhāraṇa kāraṇa*) and the common cause (*sādhāraṇa kāraṇa*). There are nine common causes that are present in all situations: 1) Īśvara; 2) Īśvara's knowledge; 3) Īśvara's desire; 4) action; 5) place; 6) time; 7) unseen potentiality (*adr̥ṣṭa*);³⁹³ 8) prior non-existence (*prāgabhāva*); and 9) absence of obstacles (*pratibandhakābhāva*) (*VP* 7.2, 201-6, *VP* 1.3, 5). For a *vṛtti* that is a cognition (*jñāna-rūpa*), the material cause is the *antaḥ-kāraṇa*, and the efficient causes are the means of cognition (*pramāṇa*) as well as the functioning (*vyāpāra*) of the contact between the sense organs and the objects, etc. For the *vṛtti* that is Īśvara's knowledge, *māyā* is the material cause, and the efficient cause is the unseen potency (*adr̥ṣṭa*) [of the collective *jīvas*]. For an error-producing *vṛtti*, ignorance (*avidyā*) is the material cause, and defect (*doṣa*) is the efficient cause.

Earlier (in section 5.2), *vṛtti* was defined as “the cause for the illumination of the object, a modification of the *antaḥ-kāraṇa* and ignorance.” Other Vedānta texts define *vṛtti* as “the modification that destroys ignorance,” but Nīścaldās rejects this definition as being too wide, since it would include indirect knowledge as well. Further, in the case of a stream of *vṛttis*, the second definition would not include the *vṛttis* of the second and subsequent moments: if the first *vṛtti* destroys the ignorance, then no ignorance remains for the subsequent *vṛttis* to destroy. However, the earlier definition is also too wide in that it includes the *vṛtti* of pleasure, sorrow and other emotional states, Īśvara's *vṛtti*, and erroneous cognitions such as silver in mother-of-pearl. Emotions and their cognitions arise simultaneously; therefore, pleasure, etc., are not available as objects for a *vṛtti* to illumine. Īśvara is omniscient; therefore, destruction of Īśvara's ignorance is meaningless. Illusory objects like mother-of-pearl mistaken for silver also arise at the same time as their cognitions, and an erroneous *vṛtti* does not destroy ignorance. Nīścaldās proposes a revised definition that does not suffer from these defects: “A *vṛtti* is a modification of the *antaḥ-kāraṇa* and ignorance that is the cause for practical usage (*asti-vyavahāra kā hetu*).” Thus, consciousness delimited by an

³⁹³ Also can represent past good and bad *karma* (*punya* and *pāpa*) bearing fruit in the present.

uncontradicted *vr̥tti* (*abādhita-vr̥tavyavacchinna-cetana*) is termed a valid cognition (*pramā-jñāna*), whereas consciousness delimited by a contradicted *vr̥tti* is an indirect cognition (*apramā-jñāna*).

As seen earlier (section 5.3), a *vr̥tti*-cognition is of two types, valid (*pramā*) and indirect (*apramā*). Indirect cognitions are further classified as true (*yathārtha*), and erroneous or false (*ayathārtha*). [The typology which follows is represented graphically in Figure 9: Types of *vr̥tti*-cognition on p. 154]. Īśvara's knowledge, cognitions of emotions such as pleasure, etc. are true indirect cognitions, whereas erroneous perception of silver in mother-of-pearl is a false indirect cognition. True cognitions born of the means of cognition are valid cognition, and cognitions that are not the result of the means of cognition, but still true and defect-free are considered indirect cognitions. Valid *vr̥ttis* are of six kinds depending upon which of the six means of cognition (perception, inference, verbal testimony, analogy, postulation, non-cognition) is involved.³⁹⁴ Immediate³⁹⁵ valid cognition (*pratyakṣa-pramā*), is further of two types. 1) External (*bāhya*), which is sub-divided into six³⁹⁶ types: five in which the uncontradicted *vr̥tti* is produced through the five senses respectively (sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch) in external substances, and the sixth in which immediate (*aparokṣa*) *vr̥tti* of the external object is generated through verbal testimony, as in “You are the tenth (*daśamas tvam asī*);”³⁹⁷ 2) Internal (*āntara*) immediate valid cognition is further sub-divided into two types: 2a) cognition pertaining to the *ātmā*; and 2b) cognition pertaining to that which is other than the *ātmā* (*anātmā-gocara*). Cognition pertaining to the *ātmā* is classified as 2a.i) cognition pertaining to the pure *ātmā* (*śuddhātma-gocara*); and 2a.ii) cognition pertaining to the qualified *ātmā* (*viśiṣṭātma-gocara*). The former is again sub-divided into 2a.i.i) Cognition pertaining to Brahman (*brahma-gocara*), *vr̥ttis* generated by the *mahāvākyas*; and 2a.i.ii) Cognition not pertaining to Brahman (*brahmāgocara*), *vr̥ttis* generated by

³⁹⁴ Nīścaldās also explores an alternate definition of *pramā* advocated by some authors that includes true memories (*yathārtha smṛti*) as valid but concludes that cognition via memory is inappropriate for inclusion within valid cognitions (VP 7.4, 208-10).

³⁹⁵ *Pratyakṣa* is normally translated as “perceptual.” Nīścaldās, however, defines a *pratyakṣa* cognition as “that where the association of the object with the knower occurs either through a *vr̥tti* or directly (*sākṣāt*), *jahāṃ viṣaya kā pramātā saim vr̥tti dvārā athavā sākṣāt sambandha hovai, tis viṣaya kā jñāna pratyakṣa hai, so viṣaya bhī pratyakṣa kahiye hai* (VP 7.4, 211). I choose “immediate” to reflect this sense.

³⁹⁶ Some others add the immediate *vr̥tti* generated by non-cognition (*anupalabdhī-pramāṇa*) as a seventh external valid means of cognition (*bāhya-pratyakṣa-pramā*) but the *vr̥tti* in the sphere of absence is different from a perceptual *vr̥tti*, as has already been discussed in the section of non-cognition (5.4.6).

³⁹⁷ See n. 387 for the tenth-man story.

subsidiary Vedānta statements (*avāntara-vākya*), such as “I am pure illumination (*śuddhaḥ prakāśo ’ham*).”³⁹⁸ External objects are connected to the cognizer (*pramātā*) through *vr̥ttis*, while internal objects are connected to the cognizer directly (*sākṣāt*). There are endless permutations of cognitions pertaining to the qualified *ātmā* (2a.ii), such as “I am ignorant, the doer, sad, happy, etc.” The object of immediate cognition (*pratyakṣa-viṣaya*) is defined as a suitable (*yogya*) object related to the cognizer in the present. The qualifier “suitable” is required to rule out merit/demerit (*dharma/adharma*) which are also attributes of *ātmā*³⁹⁹ but are not directly perceptible. Also, immediate cognition (*pratyakṣa-jñāna*) is the cognition of a suitable object connected to the cognizer by means of a suitable means of cognition. This cognition cannot be generated by an unsuitable means of cognition (*ayogya-pramāṇa-ajanyatā*), thereby including emotions which can be cognized only by the self-revealing (*sākṣī-bhāsyā*) *antaḥ-karāṇa*-qualified *ātmā*, and not by any means of cognition (*VP* 7.4, 207-16).⁴⁰⁰

The *antaḥ-karāṇa*’s *vr̥tti* in the form of memory or recollection (*smṛti*) is not a direct cognition (*pramā*). Recollection, too, is of two kinds, and is dependent upon experience: 1) true (*yathārtha*), born of true experiences, i.e., those which are in regard to uncontradicted objects, and termed valid cognitions (*pramā*); and 2) erroneous, born of erroneous experiences. True recollection is separated into two types: 1a) recollection of the *ātmā*, produced by the experience of the *mahā-vākyas*; and 1b) recollections of anything other than the *ātmā*, caused by the impressions (*saṃskāra*) produced by the illusory experience of the empirical world. Erroneous recollection is also of two kinds: 2a) recollections pertaining to the *ātmā*, such as “the self is a doer;” and 2b) recollections pertaining to anything other than the *ātmā*, such as “the creation is real,” arising from impressions of erroneous reality in the creation.

³⁹⁸ This statement is not from the Upaniṣads and I have been unable to locate which secondary Vedānta text it might be from.

³⁹⁹ This is according to Nyāya. “The eight attributes beginning with intellect are the particular attributes of *ātmā* alone. *buddhy ādayo ’aṣṭāv ātma-mātra-viśeṣa-guṇāḥ*” (*TS* 73). The eight attributes of *ātmā* are 1) intellect (*buddhi*), 2) pleasure (*sukha*), 3) pain (*duḥkha*), 4) desire (*icchā*), 5) aversion (*dveṣa*), 6) effort (*prayatna*), 7) merit (*dharma*), and 8) demerit (*adharma*), a subset of the twenty four attributes enumerated in *TS* 4.

⁴⁰⁰ Nīścaldās briefly presents the views of Vācaspati Miśra (9th c. author of the *Bhāmātī* sub-commentary on *BS ŚBh*) that the *brahma-gocara vr̥tti-jñāna* generated by the *mahā-vākyas* such as “I am Brahman, *aham brahmāsmi* (*BU* 1.4.10)” as well as the cognition of the emotions and the qualified *ātmā* are generated by the mind. This view is rejected in favor of the view that the mind is not a sense-organ (*indriya*) and no cognition is mental, the emotions are illumined by the witness in the *antaḥ-karāṇa*, and the view in the *Samkṣepa-śārīraka* (Sarvajñātman’s metrical abridgement of *BS ŚBh*) that the knowledge from the *mahā-vākyas* is always immediate (*VP* 7.4, 215-6).

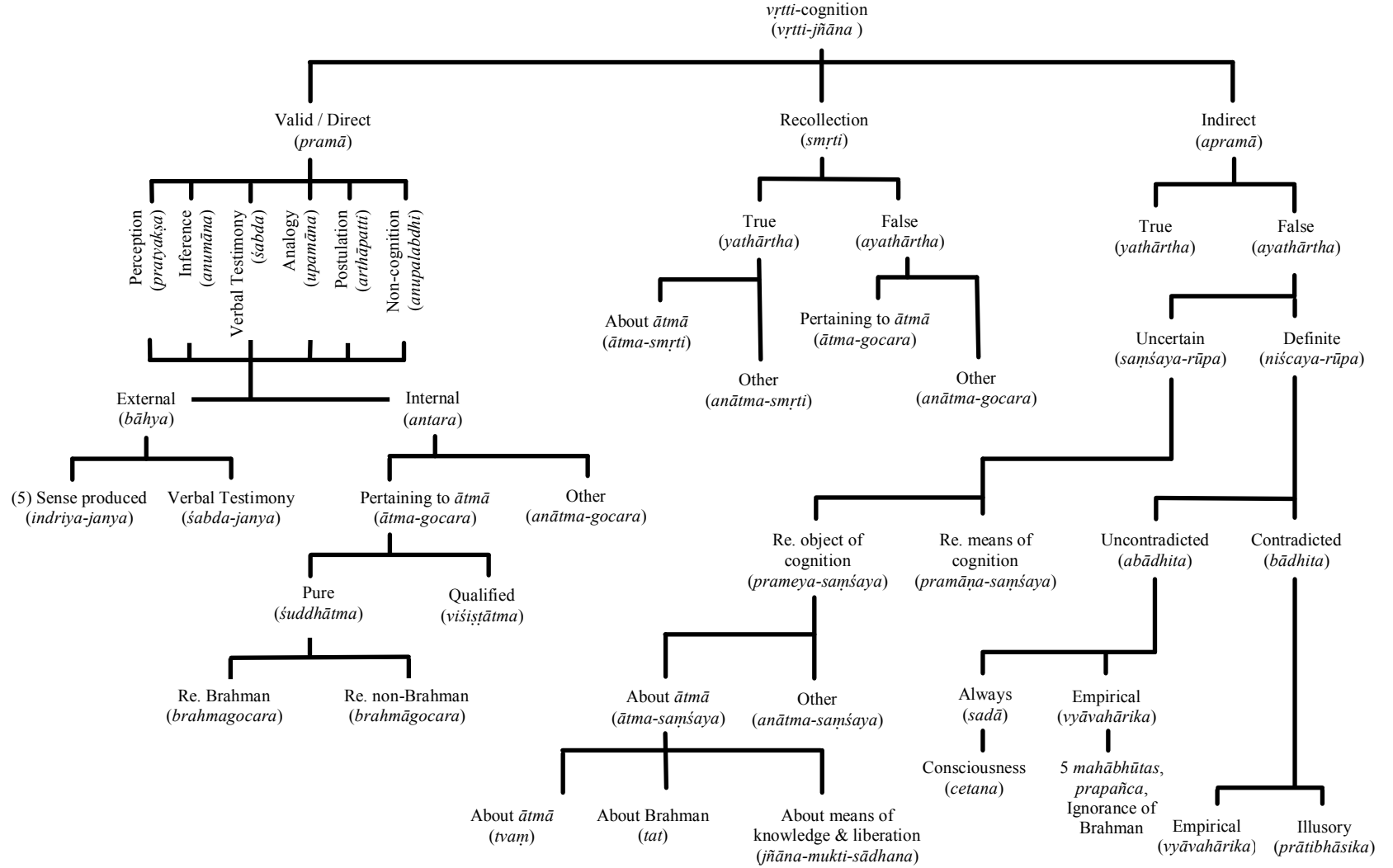
False experience is also of two kinds: 1) doubtful or uncertain (*saṁśaya-rūpa*); and 2) certain (*niścaya-rūpa*). Both of these erroneous cognitions (*bhrama*) are the cause of harm (*anartha*) and are to be avoided by a seeker. Uncertainty is the cognition of two opposing qualifiers in a qualificand. Erroneous cognitions in the form of uncertainty are also of two types: 1) uncertainty regarding the means of cognition (*pramāṇa-saṁśaya*); and 2) uncertainty regarding the object of cognition (*prameya-saṁśaya*). Uncertainty regarding the means of cognition takes the form: “Are the Vedānta utterances (*vākya*) the means for knowing non-dual Brahman or for something else?” This uncertainty is removed through the study (*śravaṇa*) of the first section (*adhyāya*) of the *Brahma-sūtra*, *BS* 1 [the *samanvaya-adhyāya*, the chapter on harmony, which establishes Brahman as the subject matter of Vedānta]. Uncertainty regarding the object of cognition is of two further types: 2a) uncertainty regarding the *ātmā* (*ātmasaṁśaya*); and 2b) uncertainty regarding everything other than the *ātmā* (*anātmasaṁśaya*). The latter (2b) has many variations, but Nīścaldās suggests there is no use in describing these. Uncertainty regarding the *ātmā* (2a) is also manifold, concerning both the nature of *tat* (Brahman) and also *tvam* (*ātmā*). These are removed via contemplation (*manana*), which is effected by listening to and contemplation of (*śravaṇa-manana*), and study (*adhyayana*) of *BS* 2 [also known as the *avirodha adhyāya*, the chapter which puts forth possible objections to the Vedānta view, and their refutations]. Uncertainty regarding the means of knowledge and liberation are included under uncertainty regarding the object of cognition (*prameya-saṁśaya* (2)) and are resolved by *śravaṇa-manana* of *BS* 3 [the chapter on *sādhana*, the means to attaining Brahman], and the initial section of *BS* 4. The uncertainty regarding the nature of liberation is resolved by *śravaṇa-manana* of the remainder of *BS* 4 [the chapter on *phala*, the result of liberation. *BS* 4.1 continues the discussion on means, and covers various meditations (*upāsanā*) and rites (*nitya-karma*), and their effects on one’s karma, merit and demerit (*puṇya-pāpa*)].

The erroneous cognition of an object that can be contradicted (*bādhita*) and is different from uncertainty is certain or definite error, as in the cognition of silver in mother-of-pearl. Definite erroneous cognitions are also of two types. 1) The erroneous cognition that cannot be contradicted without knowledge of Brahman is called unsublatable or uncontradicted (*abādhita*); 2) The erroneous cognition that can be negated by knowledge of something other than Brahman is called contradicted. The erroneous cognition that is uncontradicted is of two

types: 1a) always uncontradicted; and 1b) empirically (*vyāvahārika*) uncontradicted. Only consciousness (*cetana*) is always uncontradicted. Ignorance [of Brahman], the five elements (*mahābhūta*) and the elemental apparent world (*prapañca*) are empirically uncontradicted. Contradicted erroneous cognitions are comprised of two types: 2a) the apparent transformation (*vivarta*) of consciousness delimited by empirical substance (*vyāvahārika-padārthāvacchinna-cetana*), for example, silver perceived in mother-of-pearl; and 2b) the apparent transformation of consciousness delimited by illusory substance (*prātibhāsika-padārthāvacchinna-cetana*), for example, silver perceived in mother-of-pearl in a dream.

The different kinds of cognitions (*vṛtti-jñāna*) enumerated above, both true and false, can be represented schematically as in Figure 9, on p. 154. There are notable differences compared to the scheme of types of *vṛtti* described in section 5.3 (see on p. **Error!** **Bookmark not defined.**), particularly in the placement of recollection; earlier it was treated as an indirect (*apramā*), true (*yathārtha*) cognition, whereas now it is neither direct/valid (*pramā*) nor indirect and itself has true and false subdivisions. This is an outcome of the greater degree of detail and refinement in the current treatment, but we end up with subtly different characterizations of direct and indirect cognitions between *VP* 1 and *VP* 7. It is quite clear that Nīścaldās intended the definitions in *VP* 7 to supersede those in *VP* 1.

Though Nīścaldās does not directly state this, this classification is to aid in understanding those *vṛttis* that are worth cultivating for the purpose of attaining liberation, namely, knowledge of the identity of the self with Brahman. The implicit message is that cognitions not pertaining to the self (*anātma-gocara*) are unproductive. False (*ayathārtha*) cognitions pertaining to uncertainty regarding the means of cognition or the self can be resolved through the study and contemplation (*śravaṇa-manana*) of the four chapters of the *BS*. Definite false cognitions that can be contradicted (*bādhita*) by knowledge of something other than Brahman fall in either the empirical or illusory sphere, and can be thus resolved by a proper understanding of the nature of superimposition and erroneous cognition. The false cognitions that are empirically uncontradicted, namely, ignorance [of Brahman], the five elements (*mahābhūta*) and the elemental apparent world (*prapañca*), can only be resolved through the knowledge of Brahman.

Figure 9: Types of *vṛtti*-cognition

5.6 Chapter Summary

Nīścaldās presents the importance of a *vr̥tti* at the very outset: “By the *vr̥tti*, ‘I am Brahman,’ ignorance and its results are removed and the highest happiness (*ānanda*) is attained – this is the ultimate purpose (*siddhānta*) of Vedānta. In this connection, the desire to know arises: ‘What is a *vr̥tti*, what is the cause of a *vr̥tti*, and what is its purpose?’ For that, this text *Vr̥ttiprabhākar*, The Illuminator of *Vr̥ttis*, has been written.” Nīścaldās uses the concept of *vr̥tti* as the central theme through which to explore Vedānta epistemology, metaphysics, and praxis, as he answers the three questions he raised. His goal is to lead the reader to the knowledge of Brahman, which is attained through a *vr̥tti* in the form of Brahman (*brahmākāra vr̥tti*). A *vr̥tti* is defined as “the modification of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* and ignorance (*ajñāna*).” A *vr̥tti* leads to cognition, and it is necessary to distinguish between valid and invalid cognitions. To understand valid cognition one must understand the six means (*pramāṇa*) which are accepted by Vedānta: 1) perception (*pratyakṣa*); 2) inference (*anumāna*); 3) verbal testimony (*śabda*); 4) analogy (*upamāna*); 5) postulation (*arthāpatti*); and 6) non-cognition (*anupalabdhi*). Nīścaldās systematically explains how each of these means of cognition help one attain the knowledge of Brahman.

In the discussion of perception, we learn that for Vedānta, erroneous cognition is not sense-produced but is a modification of ignorance (*avidyā*), whereas the *antaḥ-karaṇa* is the locus as well as the material cause. Nīścaldās presents the differing views as to whether the mind is a sense-organ (as held by Vācaspati Miśra), or not. He first points out the flaws in Vācaspati Miśra’s position, but then proceeds to show how these are not necessarily defects, and concludes that in essence, it does not hurt one’s understanding of Vedānta, i.e., one’s knowledge of Brahman, to accept Vācaspati’s view that the mind is a sense-organ.

Regarding inference, traditionally the instrument (*karaṇa*) of inference is the experience of the invariable concomitance (*vyāpti*) of the probans and the probandum; the latent impressions (*saṃskāra*) that arise either from perceptual cognition or through memory are considered the intermediate cause (*vyāpāra*). However, Nīścaldās proposes that even if one holds that memory is the intermediate cause instead of a latent impression, the argument is unaffected because it does not contradict revealed or composed scriptures (*śruti-smṛti*) or the accepted doctrine (*siddhānta*). He considers it more logical to accept memory of the

invariable concomitance (*vyāpti*) as the intermediate cause. Of the two types of inference, inference for oneself (*svārtha*) and inference for others (*parārtha*), the latter is useful for proving the identity of the individual (*jīva*) and Brahman, although inference alone cannot be the cause for self-realization of Brahman because the doctrine states that, apart from the Vedānta utterances (*vākya*), no other means of knowledge takes up Brahman as its object. Inference merely serves to bring one closer to the knowledge of Brahman.

Verbal testimony is the most important means of cognition for Advaita, because it alone can bring about the realization of the identity of the *jīva* and Brahman. The means of verbal cognition (*śabda pramāṇa*) is the knowledge of all the words of a sentence qualified by their significatory function (*vṛtti*, in a narrower, specialized sense). The significatory function is the mutual relation between a word and its meaning and can be either a direct significatory relation (*śakti-vṛtti*) or an indirect or implied significatory relation (*lakṣaṇā-vṛtti*). On the basis of the relation between the literal and implied meanings (*śakya* and *lakṣya*), the implication (*lakṣaṇā*) is either bare implication (*kevala-lakṣaṇā*), where the implied meaning is directly connected to the literal meaning, or indirect or double implication (*lakṣita-lakṣaṇā*), where the implied meaning is indirectly connected to the literal meaning. Implication can also be classified into three types, depending upon the extent to which the literal meaning (*śakya*) of the word is retained or given up in the implied meaning (*lakṣya*): 1) exclusive implication (*jahal-lakṣaṇā*), wherein the literal meaning is given up and the implied meaning is considered instead; 2) inclusive implication (*ajahal-lakṣaṇā*), wherein the literal meaning as well as the implied meaning are intended; 3) inclusive-and-exclusive implication (*bhāga-tyāga-lakṣaṇā*),⁴⁰¹ wherein a part of the literal meaning is preserved while the rest is given up. Further, verbal cognition (*śābdī pramā*) is either empirical (*vyāvahārika*), or absolute (*pāramārthika*). Empirical verbal cognition is either produced by worldly sentences (*laukika-vākya-janya*), or by Vedic sentences (*vaidika-vākya-janya*). Vedic sentences teach either empirical meanings or the absolute reality, Brahman. All Vedānta statements are for the knowledge of Brahman alone, and are of two classes: 1) subsidiary statements (*avāntara-vākya*), which specifically explain either Brahman or *ātmā*; and 2) great sayings (*mahā-vākya*) such as “*tat tvam asi*, you are that (CU 6.8.7)” which

⁴⁰¹ Also known as *jahad-ajahal-lakṣaṇā*.

explain the identity between the words “you” and “that.” In comprehending the *mahā-vākyas*, only inclusive and exclusive implication (*bhāga-tyāga-lakṣaṇā*) applies. This is also bare implication (*kevala-lakṣaṇā*), as there is a direct relation between the literal meaning and the implied meaning, namely, consciousness.

When there is a potential conflict between two means of cognition, such as perception (*pratyakṣa*) and verbal testimony (*śabda*), the cognitive apparatus for the object which is more greatly desired to be known (*utkaṭa-jijñāsita*) will win out. The desire to know worldly things (*laukika padārtha*) and the apparatus for their cognition is always possible in the waking state, and these things will be cognized in the absence of a desire to know Brahman. To obstruct the apparatus of cognition of worldly things, such as perception et al., one therefore needs to develop a stronger desire to know Brahman as compared to worldly objects. Nīscaldās holds that, rather than contemplation of the meaning of the Vedānta, it is the desire to know Brahman itself that is the cause of the knowledge of Brahman. Vedānta statements are not injunctions, as the Mīmāṃsakas maintain, but have the knowledge of non-dual Brahman as their intent (*tātparya*). According to Nīscaldās, for Vedānta, even the Vedas are not eternal, as everything other than consciousness (*cetana*) is not eternal (*anitya*). Vedānta considers the Vedas and the *Mahābhārata*, etc., to be humanly authored, but Īśvara, Vyāsa (the author of *MBh*) and the other authors of scripture are considered to be omniscient. Īśvara reproduces the Vedas faithfully from creation to creation, whereas Vyāsa and the other authors create their works according to their desire in each creation, not necessarily identical to the prior creation. These created works have an intent, namely, the knowledge of Brahman, which is reproduced faithfully and eternally, from creation to creation.

The traditional Vedānta definition of analogy (*upamāna*) is the cognition of similarity. Nīscaldās proposes a better definition of analogical cognition as that which arises from the cognition of either similarity or dissimilarity. This is motivated by the fact that, if dissimilarity is not accepted as part of the definition, then, given that there is nothing similar to Brahman, analogy would not be helpful to a seeker. With the revised definition, analogy (*upamāna*) becomes the cognition of dissimilarity of the empirical world (*prapañca*) to Brahman, and its result, the analogical cognition (*upamiti*), that Brahman is dissimilar to the creation.

Postulation (*arthāpatti*) is accepted only by Vedānta and Mīmāṃsā. The postulation of an explanation (*upapādaka*) by the cognition of the lack of proof of that which is to be explained (*upapādyā*) is called the postulation cognition (*pramā*), and its cause, the lack of proof of that which is to be explained, is called the postulation means (*pramāṇa*). Postulation can be either from what is seen (*dṛṣṭārthāpatti*), or from what is heard (*śrutārthāpatti*). An example of postulation from the heard is the case of a seeker understanding the meaning of Upaniṣadic statements such as “*tarati śokam ātmavit*, one who knows the *ātmā* transcends sorrow” (CU 7.1.3). The cessation of sorrow through knowledge is heard, but there is no implied “illusoriness of sorrow, *śoka-mithyātva*.” The illusoriness of sorrow is the explanation (*upapādaka*); the cessation of sorrow through knowledge is that which is to be explained (*upapādyā*). Nīścaldās illustrates that postulation from what is seen helps one understand non-duality; after the mind is stilled during non-conceptual one-pointedness (*nirvikalpa samādhi*), only non-dual Brahman remains, and there is the absence of all experience of non-*ātmā* objects. This absence is possible only if the non-*ātmā* objects are mental constructs which cease when the mind is stilled. Due to the lack of a proof of the absence of all duality upon the stilling of the mind, the conception arises that all duality is merely a mental construct. Here, the means of postulation is the cognition of what is to be explained (*upapādyā*), namely, that all duality ceases on the stilling of the mind. The postulation cognition is the cognition of the explanation (*upapādaka*), that all duality is a mental construct.

Non-cognition (*anupalabdhi*) is accepted only by the Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsakas and the Vedāntins, as a distinct means of cognizing non-existence (*abhāva*), which they do not consider to be perceptible by the senses. The non-existence of only those objects whose existence is ordinarily perceptible by the other positive means of cognition is cognizable. The scriptures speak of the non-existence of the empirical world (*prapañca*) in the past, present and future times as in “There is no diversity here at all, *neha nānāsti kiñcana*” (BU 4.4.19). Non-cognition is useful to a seeker of liberation (*jijñāsu*) as a means of ascertaining the non-existence of the empirical world from the absolute (*pāramārthika*) standpoint. The nature of the empirical world is cognized, and if it were absolute in nature, that would also be cognized. But, it is not thus cognized; hence, there is the non-existence of the empirical

world as absolute. Non-cognition aids a seeker to arrive at the absence of diversity in the empirical world, as well as the absolute difference of the empirical world from Brahman.

Once the means of valid cognition have been described, Niścaldās turns to the second question pertaining to *vr̥ttis*, namely, what is their cause. For Advaita, there are only two types of causes, material and efficient (*upādāna* and *nimitta kāraṇa*), which can be also divided into the special cause (*asādhāraṇa kāraṇa*) and the common cause (*sādhāraṇa kāraṇa*). For a *vr̥tti* that is a cognition, the material cause is the *antaḥ-kāraṇa*, and the efficient causes are the means of cognition (*pramāṇa*) as well as the functioning (*vyāpāra*) of the contact between the sense organs and the objects, etc. For the *vr̥tti* that is Īśvara's knowledge, *māyā* is the material cause, and the efficient cause is the unseen potency (*adr̥ṣṭa*) [of the collective *jīvas*]. For an error-producing *vr̥tti*, ignorance (*avidyā*) is the material cause, and defect is the efficient cause. Niścaldās puts forth a more robust definition of a *vr̥tti* as a modification of the *antaḥ-kāraṇa* and ignorance, which is the cause for practical usage (*astivyavahāra kā hetu*). Consciousness delimited by an uncontradicted *vr̥tti* (*abādhita-vr̥ttyavacchinna-cetana*) is termed a valid cognition (*pramā-jñāna*), whereas consciousness delimited by a contradicted *vr̥tti* is an indirect cognition. The *antaḥ-kāraṇa*'s *vr̥tti* in the form of memory or recollection (*smṛti*) is treated separately from direct and indirect cognitions. A detailed classification of the various kinds of *vr̥ttis* is presented (Figure 9, p. 143) for the purpose of understanding which are the *vr̥ttis* worth cultivating for the purpose of attaining liberation, namely, knowledge of the identity of the self with Brahman, though Niścaldās does not explicitly state this. The implicit message is that cognitions not pertaining to the self (*anātma-gocara*) are unproductive. False (*ayathārtha*) cognitions pertaining to uncertainty, regarding the means of cognition or the self, can be resolved through the study and contemplation (*śravaṇa-manana*) of the four chapter of the *BS*. Definite false cognitions that can be contradicted (*bādhita*) by knowledge of something other than Brahman fall in either the empirical or illusory sphere, and can be thus resolved by a proper understanding of the nature of superimposition and erroneous cognition. The false cognitions which are empirically uncontradicted, namely, ignorance [of Brahman], the five elements (*mahābhūta*) and the elemental apparent world (*prapañca*), can be resolved only through the knowledge of Brahman.

In order to facilitate the proper understanding of the nature of superimposition and erroneous cognition so that the empirical and illusory definite false cognitions can be resolved, Niścaldās next enters into a lengthy treatment of superposition (*adhyāsa*) and various theories of error (*khyāti-vāda*), which will be the focus of chapter 6.

6 Superimposition (*Adhyāsa*) and Theories of Error (*Khyāti-vāda*)

6.1 Introduction

This chapter continues the answer to the second question pertaining to *vr̥tti*s, namely, “What is the cause of a *vr̥tti*?” Nīścaldās's answer to this question began in the previous chapter, with a classification of *vr̥tti*-cognitions into two types, valid (*pramā*) and indirect (*apramā*). Chapter 5 dealt with the means of valid cognitions (*pramāṇa*) and initiated the exploration of indirect cognitions, which were subdivided into true (*yathārtha*), and erroneous or false (*ayathārtha*). False cognitions were said to be cause of harm (*anartha*), and hence they are to be recognized and resolved, freeing seekers to devote their attention to cognizing Brahman.

Continuing the exploration of false cognitions, this chapter presents Nīścaldās's views concerning superimposition (*adhyāsa*) and various theories of error (*khyāti-vāda*). Superimposition, by means of which the unreality of the created world is explained, is a central concept in Advaita, and Nīścaldās provides multiple definitions of superimposition and two schemes for its categorization. These superimpositions are all immediate erroneous cognitions, and their difference from mediate erroneous cognitions is discussed. Nīścaldās also raises various possible objections to the theory of superimposition and presents their refutations according to Vedānta.

The rest of the chapter is devoted to an examination of six theories of error (*khyāti-vāda*). First, the Advaita theory of erroneous cognition (*anirvacanīya-khyāti-vāda*), namely, the theory that the object of erroneous cognition is logically indeterminate (*anirvacanīya*), is presented. After the soundness of the Advaita theory has been established and defended against objections, each of five non-Advaita theories is explained from the standpoint of their respective proponents and is then shown to be lacking, from the Advaita perspective. The five theories discussed are: 1) *sat-khyāti-vāda*, the theory that the object of erroneous cognition is real; 2) *asat-khyāti-vāda*, the theory that the object of erroneous cognition is unreal, as subscribed to by the Mādhyamika Buddhists and some followers of Tantra; 3) *Ātma-khyāti-vāda*, the Yogācāra Buddhist theory that the object of erroneous cognition is a mental state projected by the self; 4) *anyathā-khyāti-vāda*, the Nyāya theory that the object of erroneous cognition is real, but is present elsewhere; and 5) *akhyāti-vāda*, the Prābhākara Mīmāṃsaka theory that the erroneous cognition is the failure to distinguish between the real

recollection and real substratum. Of these five, Nīscaldās devotes the greatest attention to *anyathā-khyāti*, and in the process, refutes the Nyāya perspective concerning the cause of extraordinary (*alaukika*) perceptual cognition, as well as Naiyāyika arguments against the Advaita *anirvacanīya-khyāti*. The Prābhākara *akhyāti* also gets a fairly detailed treatment here. Being complex technical terms, the names of these six theories of error (*khyāti-vāda*) will be left untranslated henceforth in this chapter.

6.2 Superimposition (*Adhyāsa*)

In Advaita, superimposition plays a central role in explaining the unreality of the created world which is erroneously perceived as real, i.e., superimposition is the mechanism by which erroneous cognition occurs. Nīscaldās defines superimposition (*adhyāsa*) as an appearance (*avabhāsa*) in the substratum (*adhiṣṭhāna*), which possesses a reality (*sattā*) different from that of the substratum,⁴⁰² such as the erroneous cognition of silver in mother-of-pearl. Superimposition is of two kinds: 1) superimposition of an object onto a substratum (*arthādhyāsa*); and 2) superimposition of the knowledge of an object onto the knowledge of the substratum (*jñānādhyāsa*). Superimposition of an object (1) is further sub-classified: 1a) superimposition of relation (*sambandha*) only; 1b) superimposition of the relation-qualified relatum (*sambandha-viśiṣṭa sambandhī*); 1c) superimposition of a property (*dharma*); 1d) superimposition of a property-qualified object (*dharma-viśiṣṭa dharmin*); 1e) reciprocal superimposition (*anyonyādhyāsa*); and 1f) other (*anyatara*). This last category, *anyatarādhyāsa*, is itself of two kinds: 1f.i) superimposition of “that which is not *ātmā*” (*anātmā*) on *ātmā*; and 1f.ii) superimposition of *ātmā* on *anātmā*. From an ultimate (*paramārtha*) standpoint, the substratum [for all superimposition] is consciousness, while empirically (*vyāvahārika*), it is consciousness delimited by an object, say a rope (*VP* 7.7,

⁴⁰² Śaṅkara in his *adhyāsa-bhāṣya* intro to *BS* 1.1 defines superimposition even more compactly as “the apprehension of something where it is not present, *atasmimś tad-buddhiḥ*.” Nīscaldās also presents this alternative definition: “Superimposition is the manifestation [of an object] in the locus of its absence, *apne abhāva ke adhikaraṇa maiṃ ābhāsa kūṃ adhyāsa kahaiṃ haiṃ*” (*VP* 7.10, 226). Earlier in the *adhyāsa-bhāṣya*, Śaṅkara also defines superimposition as “It is the apparent cognition, similar to recollection, of something seen earlier in something else. *smṛti-rūpaḥ paratra pūrva-dṛṣṭāvabhāsaḥ*” (1980, 10-13).

221-3).⁴⁰³ This can be depicted graphically as Figure 10.

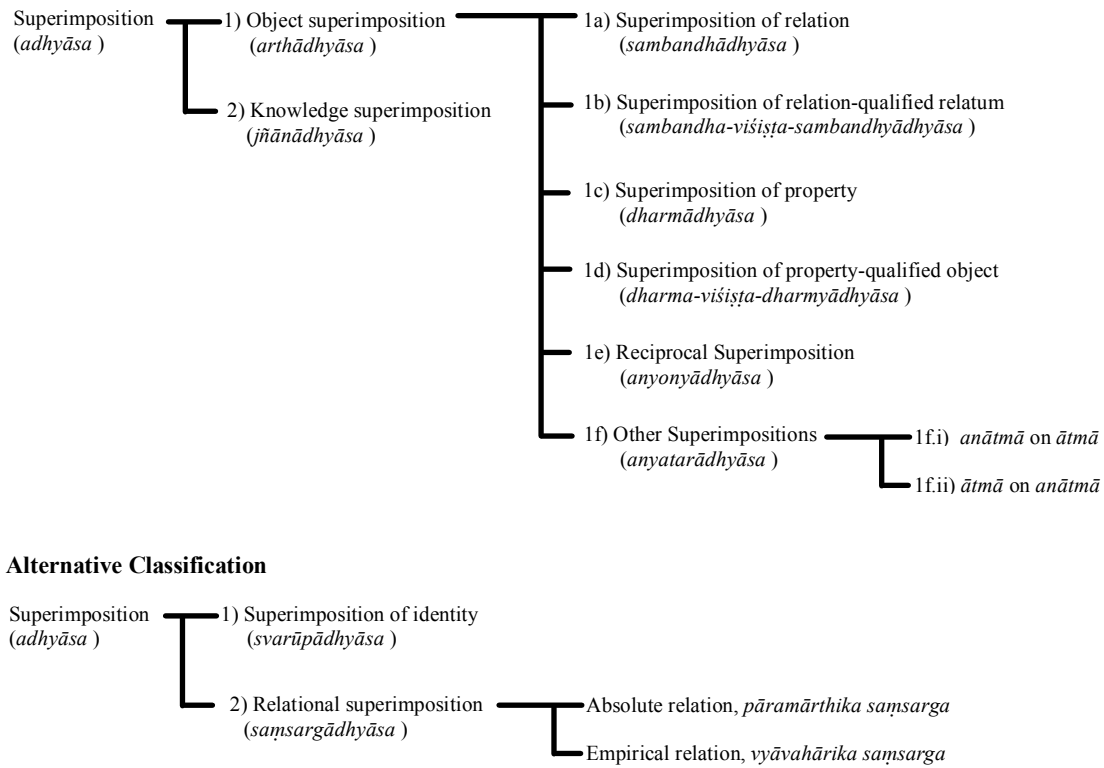


Figure 10: Types of Superimposition

Regarding the reciprocal superimposition (*anyonyādhyāsa*, 1e), one can raise the objection that, if one says “the substratum of *ātmā* is *anātmā*,” then *ātmā* is superimposed, i.e., it is imaginary. Hence, one cannot say “*ātmā* is superimposed on *anātmā*.” In response to this, Nīścaldās puts forward an alternative categorization of superimposition into two types: 1) superimposition of one’s nature or identity (*svarūpādhyāsa*), wherein the nature of a substance arises as neither true nor false, but logically indeterminate (*anirvacanīya*), for example, a snake superimposed on a rope; and 2) relational superimposition (*saṃsargādhyāsa*), wherein a logically indeterminate (*anirvacanīya*) relation arises in a substance whose nature is valid, whether absolutely (*pāramārthika*) or empirically (*vyāvahārika*). Examples of empirical relational superimposition are [the reflection of] the face in the mirror, and the appearance of red color in cloth due to saffron dye (*kusumbha dravya*) or in a crystal due a red flower behind it. In the case of absolute relational

⁴⁰³ Examples of these various kinds of superimpositions are provided in *VP* 7.14, 231-4.

superimposition, although consciousness (*cetana*) cannot possibly be superimposed upon ego (*ahankāra*) [because, for Vedānta, consciousness is the substratum of not just the ego, but of the entire empirical and illusory creation], the relation (*sambandha*) of consciousness can be superimposed. Consciousness is absolute and not imaginary, but the identity-relation (*tādātmya-sambandha*) between consciousness and ego is imagined. In such cases, one can accept *anyathā-khyāti* here, although it actually is *anirvacanīya-khyāti*.⁴⁰⁴ [Vedānta texts often accept the Nyāya theory of *anyathā-khyāti* as a possible explanation of cases where reality is erroneously perceived in inert objects, and in the cases of mediate erroneous cognition. This will be revisited in detail in section 6.3.5, when Nīscaldās's evaluation of *anyathā-khyāti* is presented].

In the case of *ātmā* superimposed on *anātmā*, if only the relation were superimposed, then both the substratum and the superimposed relation would have the same reality, namely, empirical (*vyāvahārika*), and the definition of *adhyāsa* [that the substratum and the superimposed have different orders of reality] would not be satisfied. Therefore, the superimposition is considered to be the absolute *ātmā* qualified by the relation. “Reality” (*sattā*) [i.e., the substratum, *anātmā*, empirically perceived as real] is different from “reality as consciousness” (*cetana-svarūpa-sattā*) [i.e., the superimposition, which has absolute reality]. The former “reality” has gradations (*utkarṣa-apakarṣa*, lit. increase & decrease, or superiority & inferiority); there are three orders of reality: absolute (*pāramārthika*); empirical (*vyāvahārika*); and illusory (*prātibhāsika*). Objects perceived in a dream have illusory reality, but the substratum of the dream is the witness-consciousness (*sākṣī*), which has absolute reality and is thus of a different order of reality, and therefore, the definition of superimposition holds for dream objects too. (*VP* 7.8-9, 223-6).

Superimposition can alternatively be defined as “the manifestation [of an object] in the locus (*adhikaraṇa*) of its absence.”⁴⁰⁵ For example, where silver is erroneously perceived in mother-of-pearl, there is both absolute and empirical absence of silver in the mother-of-pearl, and the silver is logically indeterminate (*anirvacanīya*). This may give rise to a doubt regarding whether presence (*bhāva*) and absence can occur in the same substratum. However,

⁴⁰⁴ Both these terms, *anyathā-khyāti* and *anirvacanīya-khyāti* refer to specific theories of error, and will be taken up in sections 6.3.5 and 6.3.1 respectively.

⁴⁰⁵ See n. 402 on p. 160.

presence and absence can coexist in the same locus, as borne out by experience: in the locus of a pot, the absence of a pot qualified by past time does not oppose the presence of the pot. There is no opposition between the absence and presence of differing realities. The imagined object has illusory reality; its absence has either empirical or absolute reality. Similarly, in the case of a superimposition, the erroneous cognition (*bhrama-jñāna*) and its object arise as logically indeterminate, i.e., neither real nor non-existent (*anirvacanīya*), but its absence has conventional reality (*VP* 7.10, 226-7).

Erroneous cognition [i.e., the result of superimposition] is of two kinds: mediate (*parokṣa*), and immediate (*aparokṣa*). All the types of superimposition described thus far can be considered immediate erroneous cognition (*aparokṣa bhrama*). An example of mediate erroneous cognition is a fire that is erroneously inferred in a location without fire. The same erroneous conclusion can also be reached through deceitful verbal testimony. Superimposition cannot be considered to be a mediate erroneous cognition [earlier, Nīścaldās had defined superimposition as “an appearance (*avabhāsa*) in the substratum, which possesses a reality different from that of the substratum”], because the term “appearance” implies an object (*viśaya*) and its immediate cognition (*aparokṣa jñāna*). For the cases of mediate erroneous cognition, the Nyāya *anyathā-khyāti* theory is adequate. Advaita only insists on a different theory in connection with superimposition regarding immediate erroneous cognition. The non-objective (*anartha*) erroneous cognitions such as agency, etc., are immediate erroneous cognitions, and Advaita describes the theory of superimposition only for the invalidation (*nivartyatā*) [of these erroneous immediate cognitions] by means of knowledge [of one’s true nature] (*VP* 7.14, 233-4).

Nīścaldās posits four further objections to his explanation of superimposition and offers their refutations.⁴⁰⁶

Objection 1: It cannot be the case that “the substratum of a dream is the witness-consciousness (*sākṣī*) [as was stated when defending the definition of superimposition, that the superimposition and the substratum possess different orders of reality].” Whatever is projected is cognized in conjunction with its substratum. When superimposed silver is perceived as “this is silver,” it is perceived along with the “this-ness” of its substratum,

⁴⁰⁶ These are presented in some detail to give a sense of Nīścaldās’s methodology and reasoning processes (*VP* 7.12-13, 227-31).

mother-of-pearl. When agency (*kartṛtva*) is superimposed upon *ātmā*, as “I am the doer”, it is cognized in conjunction with the *ātmā*, “I”. In a dream, if an elephant were superimposed on the witness-consciousness, then it ought to be cognized as “I am an elephant” or “an elephant is in me,” but this does not occur. [The objector is trying to show that the definition of superimposition does not hold in the case of dreams].

Response: Superimposition (*adhyāsa*) always occurs due to latent impressions (*saṃskāra*) of prior experiences. These impressions are the efficient cause of superimposition, whereas the material cause of all superimpositions is ignorance (*avidyā*). Dependent upon whether or not the prior experience had “I-ness,” “in-me-ness,” or “this-ness,” the resulting superimposition will have the same form. Since the experience of elephants is always accompanied by “this-ness,” in a dream too, the cognition will be “this is an elephant.” (One never sees an elephant and experiences “I am an elephant” [or “the elephant is in me”]). The latent impressions are inferable in accordance with the effect. Since the prior experience, which is the generator of these latent impressions, is also a superimposition, the stream of impression-experience-impression is beginning-less, and one cannot argue that there is no cause for the first experience.

Objection 2: It cannot be said that “the absence of silver in mother-of-pearl is absolute,” [as was stated while presenting the alternative definition of superimposition as the manifestation of an object in the locus of its absence], since only consciousness is absolute according to Advaita.

Response: According to Vedānta, all substances are imagined, but their absence is indeed absolute, and their absence is Brahman. This is Śaṅkara’s view, and the reasoning (*yukti*) behind this will be explained shortly [in *VP* 8.78-84 and section 8.3.2, “The illusoriness of the unreal creation”]; this is not detrimental to the Advaita position.

Objection 3: [The same alternative definition of superimposition, as in Objection 2, suggests that the illusory silver perceived in mother-of-pearl is logically indeterminate (*anirvacanīya*). It also suggests that the Nyāya *anyathā-khyāti* theory is adequate for explaining mediate erroneous cognitions, but the Advaita theory of superimposition, *anirvacanīya-khyāti*, is required to explain immediate erroneous cognitions. This is under attack here]. It cannot be said that “*anirvacanīya* silver is created and destroyed in mother-of-pearl,” since if this were

the case, its creation and destruction would be visible. Therefore, only *anyathā-khyāti* is appropriate, and *anirvacanīya-khyāti* is not possible.⁴⁰⁷

Response: The silver in mother-of-pearl and the mother-of-pearl’s “this-ness” in the silver are both superimposed by a mutual identity relation. That is the reason why silver appears in mother-of-pearl as “this is silver”. Similarly, the mother-of-pearl’s property of prior-presence (*prāk-siddhatva-dharma*) is superimposed on silver; therefore, instead of “Now silver is produced,” the cognition “I see previously produced silver” occurs. To accept the arising of logically indeterminate prior-production (*anirvacanīya-prāg-jātatva*) in silver would give rise to undue complexity (*gaurava*). It is possible to posit that the cognition of the mother-of-pearl’s prior-production in silver requires accepting *anyathā-khyāti*, as some Advaitins do. However, it is proper (*samīcīna*) in this situation to accept the fact that the indeterminate relation of the mother-of-pearl’s property of prior-existence arises in silver, which then opposes the cognition of the perception of the silver being produced in the present. As to the cognition of the silver’s destruction, when the substratum, mother-of-pearl, is cognized, the silver is destroyed via the ascertainment of its negation, i.e., that there is no silver in the mother-of-pearl in the past, present and future; silver is always absent in the mother-of-pearl. The destruction of the imagined silver takes place due to the cognition of the mother-of-pearl substratum, which alone remains. The cessation (*nivṛtti*) of the material cause, ignorance, as well as of that which was imagined (*kalpita*), occurs through the cognition of the substratum.

Objection 4: That which is not real is unreal, and that which is not unreal is real. It is improper to say that the erroneously cognized silver, etc., are neither real nor unreal but logically indeterminate (*anirvacanīya*). [In refuting this objection to the need for a third, logically indeterminate state, Nīścaldās provides the Advaita definition of the term *anirvacanīya*].

Response: This objection would be true if “other than real or unreal (*sad-asad-vilakṣaṇa*)” meant something that was neither with nor without form (*svarūpa*). But here “real (*sat*)” means that which cannot be negated (*bādhita*) in the past, present and future, while “other than real (*sad-vilakṣaṇa*)” is that which is negated. “Unreal (*asat*)” means that which has no form, such as the “hare of a horn” or “son of a barren woman,” “other than unreal (*asad-*

⁴⁰⁷ *Anyathā-khyāti* and *anirvacanīya-khyāti* will be discussed in great detail shortly, in sections 6.3.5 and 6.3.1 respectively.

vilakṣaṇa)” is that which has form. Thus, “other than real or unreal” is that which has a form and can be negated.⁴⁰⁸

6.3 Theories of Error, *Khyāti-vāda*

In describing and defending the Advaita theory of superimposition (*adhyāsa*) [the process whereby erroneous cognition occurs], Nīścaldās cites the Advaita theory of erroneous cognition, *anirvacanīya-khyāti*, as the only one capable of satisfactorily explaining immediate erroneous cognitions. He also cites the Nyāya theory, *anyathā-khyāti*, which he claims is adequate for explaining mediate erroneous cognitions. Therefore, Nīścaldās now presents the various theories of error (*khyāti-vāda*) subscribed to by different schools of thought, starting with his own, the Advaita *anirvacanīya-khyāti*. After the soundness of the Advaita theory is established and defended against objections from within the Advaita framework, each of the five non-Advaita theories is explained from the standpoint of its respective proponent and is then shown to be lacking from the Advaita perspective.⁴⁰⁹

6.3.1 *Anirvacanīya-khyāti-vāda*, The Advaita Theory that the Object of Erroneous Cognition is Logically Indeterminate

For Advaita, only the *anirvacanīya-khyāti-vāda* theory, that the object of erroneous cognition is logically indeterminate (*anirvacanīya*), provides a satisfactory explanation of immediate erroneous cognitions. All objects of erroneous cognition, including the apparent creation (*saṃsāra*), are not unreal (*asat*) because they possess form and a relative reality until they are recognized as false. However, these objects are not real (*sat*) either, as they can be negated through knowledge. For something to be considered real in Advaita, it needs to be non-negatable (*abādhita*) in all three times – past, present and future (*trikāla*). Since only Brahman satisfies this criterion, anything other than Brahman is unreal from the absolute (*pāramārthika*) perspective, even though it may possess empirical (*vyāvahārika*) or illusory (*prātibhāsika*) reality. In order to gain the knowledge of Brahman, one must understand the process by which erroneous cognitions occur. This section presents Nīścaldās's treatment of

⁴⁰⁸ As Potter states, “falsity must have a status above negation but below reality. It is not real (*sat*) like Brahman, but it isn't unreal (*asat*) like nonsense either” (1963, 221).

⁴⁰⁹ The objections and refutations presented are between Advaita and the respective systems, but from the Advaita perspective. For a good general treatment of *khyāti-vāda*, including inter-system arguments, see *Perceptual Error: The Indian Theories* (Rao 1998). Also Sinha (1969, 74-120), Mohanty (2000, 32-5), Raju (1985, s.v. “Doctrine of Error” for individual systems).

anirvacanīya-khyāti, which continues the discussion of superimposition begun in the previous section (section 6.2). First, the mechanics of an erroneous cognition by means of a *vr̥tti* is analyzed. In order to demonstrate the incorrectness of the view of an Advaitin named Kavītārīkika Cakravartī Nṛsiṃha Bhaṭṭopādhyāya (KCNB), Nīścaldās next (in section 6.3.1.1) undertakes the investigation of the agency (*karaṇatā*) of superimposition, whether it is the general cognition of the substratum, the miscognition of the substratum’s particular portion, or simply the contact of the senses with the substratum. Without going into the detailed debate between KCNB and the proponent of substantive cognition (*dharmi-jñāna-vādin*, DJV), the following section (6.3.1.2) then presents a summary of four views concerning the locus of the erroneous cognition, a discussion of their relative merits, and the determination of which view accords with the Advaita tradition.

When an erroneous cognition of a snake occurs on a rope, the rope’s general characteristic (*sāmānya*), “this-ness,” is perceived by the eyes that have a defect. This gives rise to the *antaḥ-karaṇa*’s “this-ness” *vr̥tti* in the rope, which then becomes non-separate from the cognizer’s consciousness delimited by “this-ness,” and the rope’s general “this-ness” is thereby immediately cognized. To explain the process of perception by means of a *vr̥tti*, Nīścaldās draws an analogy to the case of water in a reservoir that becomes indistinct from water in a [submerged] field when connected to the reservoir via a canal; as a result the water in the canal is also indistinct from the water in the field.⁴¹⁰ Analogously, “water in the reservoir” is the cognizer’s consciousness, the canal is the *vr̥tti*, “water in the canal” is the *vr̥tti*’s consciousness [thought to go out of the eye or other appropriate sense-organ to the object being perceived and assume the object’s form], the field is the object, and “water in the field” is consciousness manifesting as the object [abbreviated henceforth as “object-consciousness”]. The object-delimited consciousness is the substratum for all objects. When the being (*sattā*) of cognizer-consciousness becomes the being (*sattā*) of the object via the *antaḥ-karaṇa*’s *vr̥tti*, that object is perceptually cognized (*pratyakṣa*). The cognizer-consciousness is the basis of the immediate *vr̥tti*’s object, and its being becomes indistinct from the object’s being; hence, the identity of the cognizer-consciousness with the object occurs. For this to happen, the *vr̥tti* is considered to extend to the object. The tradition holds

⁴¹⁰ A similar analogy is made in *Vedānta-paribhāṣā* in connection with perception (Adhvarīndra 1972, 14-16).

that for an erroneous cognition (*bhrama*), the general attribute (“this-ness”) of the substratum is validly perceptually cognized (*pratyakṣa pramā*), and subsequently the erroneous cognition of the snake arises (*VP* 7.15, 234-6).

The objection can be raised that, since ignorance is removed by immediate cognition (*aparokṣa pramā*),⁴¹¹ the removal of ignorance occurs in the object-consciousness due to the immediate cognition of the “this-ness” of rope, mother-of-pearl, etc. Now, since the material cause (ignorance) is no longer present, the snake and its erroneous cognition cannot arise. Nīścaldās presents Sarvajñātman’s refutation of this objection from the *Samkṣepa-śārīraka*⁴¹² as follows: Although the ignorance in the “this” portion of the object is removed by the *vṛtti*, the ignorance of its particular portion (*viśeṣa aṃśa*) is not removed. This ignorance is the cause of the superimposition, and the superimposition is only removed by the knowledge of the particular portion. The ignorance of the general (*sāmānya*) portion is not the cause for superimposition; rather the cognition of the general portion of the substratum is a cause for the superimposition, and the general portion causes a perturbation (*kṣobha*) of the ignorance, which is the material cause for the superimposition (*VP* 7.16, 236-7).

6.3.1.1 The agency (*karaṇatā*) of superimposition

Nīścaldās next takes up for consideration the viewpoint expressed by one Kavitārkika Cakravartī Nṛsiṃha Bhaṭṭopādhyāya (KCNB), that the contact of the eyes with the substratum alone is the cause for superimposition, so there is no need for two parts in any superimposition. Not much is known about this exponent beyond the fact that this view is attributed to KCNB and is presented at length by Appayya Dīkṣita in his *Siddhānta-leśa-saṅgraha* (*SLS*).⁴¹³ There (in the *SLS*), Appayya Dīkṣita simply presents but does not render any judgment on KCNB’s views. In the *Kṛṣṇālaṅkāra* commentary to *SLS*, however, the commentator Acyutakṛṣṇa Tīrtha refutes KCNB from the perspective of a *dharmi-jñāna-vādī* (DJV), i.e., one who accepts that the “this-ness” *vṛtti* of an object mistaken for something else is cognized and that it serves as the substratum for the superimposition. *Dharmi-jñāna* can also be termed substantive cognition. Nīścaldās is of the opinion that, although KCNB

⁴¹¹ This will be elaborated on in *VP* 8.126-44, discussed in section 9.1.3, “The immediacy (*aparokṣatā*) of knowledge and its object.”

⁴¹² *SS* 1.29-38 (Sarvajñātman 1972, 14-18).

⁴¹³ S. S. Suryanarayan Sastri places the date of KCNB in the vicinity of 1283 CE (1930, 52-3).

was an Advaitin, his views were against traditional views;⁴¹⁴ therefore, Nīscaldās takes up KCNB’s arguments and the DJV counterarguments at length in order to refute the KCNB stance (*VP* 7.17, 237-8).⁴¹⁵

KCNB does not accept that the general cognition (*sāmānya-jñāna*) of the substratum (*adhiṣṭhāna*) is the cause of the superimposition. But when the general cognition of the substratum is held to be the cause of the superimposition [the traditional view], the superimposition does not require ignorance of the “this-ness” portion. To make this clear, Sarvajñātman, in his *Samkṣepa-śārīraka* (*SŚ*),⁴¹⁶ takes up the difference between substratum (*adhiṣṭhāna*) and locus (*ādhāra*).⁴¹⁷ The substratum is the object of ignorance, along with its effect (*savilāsa*); for example, the rope, as the object of ignorance, is the substratum, and the effect [of the ignorance of the rope] is the [misperceived] snake. The locus is that whose manifestation (*sphuraṇa*) occurs in the superimposed object without being differentiated from that object, for example, “this is a snake.” In this [*SŚ*] view, we have: “The general ‘this’ portion of the locus and the substratum are [jointly] the object of one cognition,” as in “this is a snake.” If, as in the KCNB view, we have, “The locus and the substratum are [jointly] the object of one cognition,” then the erroneous cognition would be of the form “the rope is a snake”. Therefore, the ignorance of a particular portion alone is the cause of superimposition (*VP* 7.17, 238).

Prakāśātman (1000 CE), the author of the *Pañcapādikā Vivaraṇa* (*PPV*), explains the agency (*karaṇatā*) of superposition differently. Ignorance has two powers, concealment (*āvaraṇa*) and projection (*vikṣepa*). The concealment portion of the mother-of-pearl-delimited ignorance is removed by the cognition (*jñāna*) [of the mother-of-pearl], but the projection portion of the mother-of-pearl-delimited ignorance is not opposed by cognition and hence is not removed. For example, the “below” portion of a tree is erroneously cognized

⁴¹⁴ *VP* 7.17, 238.

⁴¹⁵ Without further careful analysis, I am presently unable to determine whether Nīscaldās is merely reproducing Acyutaśaṅkara’s arguments here or providing his own independent critique, though they both arrive at the same conclusion, that only the DJV position is tenable.

⁴¹⁶ The *Samkṣepa-śārīraka* (*SŚ*) is a condensed metrical version of the *BS ŚBh* by Sarvajñātman (1050 CE). Though some consider him a disciple of Sureśvara, this is not the case (Sarvajñātman 1972, 1-5; Thangaswami 1980, 238-9).

⁴¹⁷ *SŚ* 1.31-2: *saṃsiddhā savilāsa-moha-viṣaye vastuṇy adhiṣṭhāna-gīr nādhāre adhyasanasya vastuni ... adhiṣṭhānam ādhāra-mātram yadi syāt prasajyeta tadā codyam etat; na caitat sakaryasya mohasya vastuṇy adhiṣṭhāna-gīr-gocare loka-siddhā*. “The term ‘substratum’ is well established in the thing which is the object of ignorance along with its manifestation, and not in the thing that is the locus of the superimposed. ... If the locus alone were the substratum, then truly this objection [of mutual superimposition, also raised by KCNB] would hold, but it is not so. It is well known that the term ‘substratum’ is used in connection with the objects of ignorance and its effects.”

on seeing it reflected in water. When a person who is liberated while alive (*jīvan-mukta*) has immediate perception of oneness with Brahman, the portion of ignorance delimited by its power of concealment is removed, but not the portion delimited by its power of projection (*VP* 7.18, 238-9).

According to *SS*, the property of being the substratum (*adhiṣṭhānatā*) is in the particular portion of the object, and not in the general portion, whereas the property of being the locus (*ādhāratā*) is in the general portion, not in the particular portion. The “this-ness” of the rope, mother-of-pearl, etc., can be cognized via the means of cognition, but because their rope-ness, mother-of-pearl-ness is not available for cognition, and their particular form remains unknown; therefore, their particular form possesses the substratum-ness (*adhiṣṭhānatā*).

According to *PPV*, the property of being a substratum (*adhiṣṭhānatā*) is in the general portion alone. The content (*viśayatā*) of valid cognition (*pramā*) is the object’s “this-ness,” and although the “this-ness” opposes the projection power, yet the content of the ignorance due to concealing power is possible even when [the “this-ness” is] known. Therefore, the “this-ness” alone is the substratum of silver.

The subtlety [reconciling the *SS* and *PPV* views] lies in the fact that the concealing performed by ignorance occurs in consciousness alone.⁴¹⁸ The content of cognition produced by its means (*pramāṇa*), i.e., the valid cognition (*prameyatā*) resulting from the overthrow of the concealment, also occurs in consciousness alone. Similarly, the substratum of all superimpositions is consciousness alone.⁴¹⁹ Since inert objects are themselves superimposed, how can they be the substratum of other superimpositions? The object of the primary ignorance (*mūlājñāna*)⁴²⁰ is undivided (*niravayava*), non-delimited (*niravacchinna*), all-pervasive (*vibhū*) consciousness, whereas the object of the secondary ignorance (*tūlājñāna*) is consciousness delimited by the object.⁴²¹ Thus, consciousness contains the inert objects that are the delimiters of the states of ignorance, knowledge, and superimposition. Ignorance, etc., are possible in these inert objects by the relationships of delimitation (*avacchedakatā*-

⁴¹⁸ Nīścaldās is careful to point out that the concealment due to ignorance is not accepted in inert objects that are naturally concealed, similar to being born blind, i.e., the concealment is with regards to empirical reality. *VP* 7.19, 240: *svabhāva saim āvrta-rūpa janmāndha ke samāna jara-padārthana maiṃ ajñāna-kṛta āvaraṇa kā āṅgikāra nahim*.

⁴¹⁹ This is from the absolute (*pāramārthika*) standpoint.

⁴²⁰ Primary ignorance (*mūlājñāna* / *mūlāvidyā*) is the ignorance of Brahman.

⁴²¹ Primary and secondary ignorance are discussed in greater detail in *VP* 8.38-47 and will be treated in sections 8.1 and 8.2.

sambandha). Therefore, the superimposition of a snake on a rope can be interpreted in two ways:

- S1. When the senses come into contact with the cause of the erroneous cognition of snake, namely the rope, the *vr̥tti* of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* arises as a valid cognition of the general portion (*sāmānya-jñāna-pramā*), namely, the object's "this-ness". The projecting (*kṣobha-vatī* = *vikṣepa-vatī*) ignorance gets transformed together with this cognition of the general portion, into a snake, etc. [This is the *PPV* view].
- S2. The portion of ignorance in consciousness delimited by the object such as rope, etc., gets transformed into the object-form as snake, etc., and the portion of ignorance in consciousness delimited by the "this" form (*idamākāra*) *vr̥tti* gets transformed into knowledge. The rope-delimited consciousness is the substratum of the snake; the "this" *vr̥tti*-delimited consciousness is the substratum of the snake cognition. [This is the *SŚ* view] (*VP* 7.19, 239-41).

The latter [*SŚ*] interpretation (S2) can be objected to⁴²² as follows. It is inappropriate to describe the distinction between the object and its cognition with regard to their material cause and substratum, since the consciousness delimited by the object and the consciousness delimited by the *vr̥tti* are the same when there arises a perceptual *vr̥tti* of the "this-ness". 1) If the substratum of the [superimposed] snake-object is held to be different from the substratum of its cognition, then, by cognition of the substratum, the cognition of the snake will not be removed, since that which is superimposed is removed by cognition of the substratum. 2) If the removal of the superimposed object occurs by the cognition of the substratum of something else, then by the cognition of the rope substratum of the superimposed snake, the empirical creation (*saṃsāra*) superimposed [on Brahman] should also be removed.

Nīścaldās responds to this by stating that where there is a distinction caused by an *upādhi* ("limiting adjunct, condition"), and by the removal of the *upādhi*, the distinction of the object is also removed. [The term *upādhi* is typically rendered in English rather opaquely as "limiting adjunct" or "adventitious condition," and I have chosen to leave it untranslated. An *upādhi* indicates an entity that conditions something else, whereby the *upādhi*'s attributes are perceived to belong to the other object. The typical example is a clear crystal, which appears

⁴²² Presumably by KCNB.

red in color due to the proximity of a red flower behind it; the red flower is the *upādhi* of the crystal, which is not really red but is conditioned to appear red by its *upādhi*. An *upādhi* may limit another entity instead of conditioning it: limitless space appears as pot-space due to the pot-*upādhi*, and as hut-space due to the hut-*upādhi*. Similarly, Brahman as consciousness appears in varied forms – *jīva*, *Īśvara*, knower, known, knowledge – based on the associated *upādhis*. The conditioning or limiting by the *upādhi* is only apparent and not real].

Where there are two *upādhis* in one location, there too, that which is limited or conditioned (*upahita*) remains the same, and in that location the two properties reside in the form of their *upādhi*-ness (*upahitatva-rūpa*). For example, the same space (*ākāśa*) can have two *upādhis*, pot-formed and hut-formed, and can be differentiated accordingly, but when the *upādhis* are destroyed, the space then becomes one and the same. In the rope-snake superimposition, when the *vr̥tti* goes out to the location of the rope-object, although the consciousness conditioned by the *vr̥tti* becomes the same as the consciousness conditioned by the object, on account of the existence of the two *upādhis*, two qualities (*dharma*) reside in consciousness: 1) the state of being *vr̥tti*-conditioned (*vr̥tti-upahitatva*); and 2) the state of being rope-conditioned (*rajju-upahitatva*). The latter (2) is the delimiting (*avacchedaka*) quality of the substratum-ness (*adhiṣṭhānatā*) of the snake-object, and the former (1) is the delimiting quality of the substratum-ness of the snake-cognition. The material cause for each state's substratum-ness is the respective portion of ignorance (*ajñānāmśa*). Although the consciousness is the same, and although the object and the *vr̥tti* are in the same place, it is not improper to talk of the difference between the material cause and the substratum because of the *upādhis*. That is why, by knowing one substratum it is possible to end the superimposed object and its cognition (*VP* 7.20, 241-2).

Regarding the former [*PPV*] interpretation of superimposition (S1), there are two ways in which the erroneous cognition can be explained relative to the valid cognition of “this-ness” (*idam̐tā*), defined as “the relation to the present time and present location (*purodeśa*).”

- 1) While the imagined object may seem empirically real due to the “this-ness” residing in the substratum being perceived, the “this-ness” does not reside in the imagined object. If the erroneous cognition were to reside entirely in the superimposed object, then the cognition would be of the type “silver” as opposed to “This is silver.” The cognition of the relation (*sambandha*) itself does not occur without the relatum (*sambandhī*); thus, the

immediate erroneous cognition of “this-ness” in the realm of the superimposed cannot occur without the “this-ness” residing in the substratum. The “this-ness” is perceived in two ways: a) the *antaḥ-karaṇa*’s *vr̥tti* in the form of a valid cognition of “this” by the contact of the senses and the substratum; and b) a *vr̥tti* as an erroneous cognition of snake, silver, etc., which is the transformation of ignorance present in the consciousness conditioned by the *vr̥tti* in the form of “this”. This [second] *vr̥tti* also is related to the “this,” creating the identity of the “this-ness” with the superimposed object its object. Thus in all cases, immediate erroneous cognitions having the form “this” are in the form of the superimposed object.

- 2) According to many authors, the transformation of ignorance into an empirical substance is not possible; it can only be transformed into an illusory substance and an erroneous cognition. Thus, the object of an erroneous cognition can only be the superimposed object, and not the “this” of the substratum. For the *vr̥tti* as a valid cognition of “this” in the substratum, an indeterminate (*anirvacanīya*) relation to its “this-ness” arises in the “this-ness”-devoid erroneous cognition and thus it is perceived as possessing “this-ness”. Alternatively, in an erroneous cognition, an *anirvacanīya* relation can be considered to arise with the object of the *vr̥tti* of “this-ness”, which allows for the perception of “this-ness” in the superimposition. Or, the consciousness delimited by the “this-ness” *vr̥tti* is the substratum of erroneous cognition. At the location of the erroneous cognition, two cognitions occur in “This is a snake.” The valid cognition *vr̥tti* has the form “this,” the erroneous cognition *vr̥tti* has the snake-form. The “this” *vr̥tti* is the substratum of the erroneous cognition *vr̥tti* by a delimiting relation (*avacchedakatā sambandha*), and the two have an identity relation (*abheda sambandha*). The ancient (*prācīna*) view that “the superimposed and the substratum are both objects of one cognition (*jñāna*)” may seem invalidated by the two-*vr̥tti* view stated here, but in this statement, the cognition does not imply that they are both objects of one *vr̥tti*, but rather they are objects of one witness (*sākṣī*).

6.3.1.2 The KCNB-DJV debate on the locus of an erroneous cognition: a summary

With the considerations presented in the prior section, Nīscaldās has set the stage to go deeper into the debate between KCNB and the DJV (*dharmi-jñāna-vādin*, the proponent of

substantive cognition), which he examines at considerable length (*VP* 7.22-37, 246-71), but I will not enter into the details here. KCNB's position is also presented in *SLS* 1.5.153 (Dīkṣita and Suryanarayana Sastri 1935-37, 1:220-33, 2:52-60).⁴²³ The debate between KCNB and the DJV as presented by Acyutakṛṣṇa Tīrtha in his *Kṛṣṇālaṅkāra* commentary to *SLS*, is also available in Revathy (1990, 239-84, notes: 75-90).⁴²⁴ Nīścaldās concludes the section on *anirvacanīya-khyāti* by summarizing four views on the locus of the erroneous cognition:

- 1) KCNB's view, where just one cognition in the form of a transformation of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* occurs by the connection of a defective sense and an object. This cognition is erroneous; it takes the general portion of the substratum and the superimposed object jointly as the object. This opinion does not accept the valid cognition of just the general portion of the substratum.
- 2) Immediately following the valid general cognition in the form of "this," the erroneous cognition "this is a snake/silver" that occurs is but the transformation of ignorance (*avidyā*). Making the general portion of the substratum its object, the erroneous cognition creates the superimposed object. Thus, the resulting object is of the form of "this" and the superimposed object.
- 3) The general cognition as "this," which is the cause of the superimposition is a valid cognition, and in the instant following it, the cognition, which is the transformation of ignorance in the realm of snake/silver, is erroneous. Therefore, it is not related to the substratum but only to the superimposed object. That erroneous cognition does not have the objectivity of the "this"-substance (*idaṃ-padāratha-viśayakatva*), since cognition of its substratum does possess the objectivity of the "this"-substance. However, an *anirvacanīya* relation to "this" arises in the erroneous cognition. Thus, that erroneous cognition is only of the form of the superimposed object.

According to Nīścaldās, (2) and (3) fall under DJV, substantive cognition. (3) alone is proper (*samīcīna*).

- 4) Within DJV, there are some authors who hold a third alternative. Their view is that since the cause of superimposition is the general cognition of the substratum, there is

⁴²³ See also Sastri (1930) for an earlier translation and a little more context.

⁴²⁴ I intend to compare Nīścaldās's treatment of the KCNB-DJV debate to that rendered by Acyutakṛṣṇa in greater detail in the near future. It is however outside the scope of this dissertation.

no need to consider a separate *vr̥tti* of ignorance pertaining to the snake, silver, etc. The “this”-form *vr̥tti* of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* pertaining to the substratum is accepted as the cause of superimposition, and the consciousness manifest in the *vr̥tti* itself illumines the snake/silver/etc. Thus, the snake, etc., as cognized (*jñeya*), are the transformations of ignorance, but ignorance is not transformed into cognition (*jñāna*).

Like the KCNB view (1), this last view (4) is only the superimposition of an object onto a substratum (*arthādhyāsa*); there is no acceptance of superimposition of the knowledge of an object onto the knowledge of the substratum (*jñānādhyāsa*) here. Like the KCNB view, it is also opposed to all the utterances of the teachers (*ārya-vacana*) and to reason (*yukti*), because it does not allow for erroneous cognition. Here, the “this”-cognition that occurs is in the form of a *vr̥tti* of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* due to the contact of the senses and substratum, and pertains to the substratum alone; thus it is a valid cognition (*pramā*). No other cognition is accepted by this view, thus erroneous cognition is not possible.⁴²⁵

It is thus agreed that the *vr̥tti*-cognition is in the form of the transformation of ignorance as the superimposed, and it differs from the “this”-form general cognition. There are two possibilities [for the cognition of the superimposition]. In the first, an *anirvacanīya* cognition occurs, pertaining to the substratum and the superimposed. This is not proper, because if the false, *anirvacanīya* cognition pertains to both, then the defect of the mixing of validity and error arises. Therefore, the second possibility alone is valid: in the instant after the “this”-form general cognition, only the *vr̥tti* of ignorance pertaining to the superimposed object occurs, and just as the snake, silver, etc., are false, their cognition also is false, and therefore, as with the negation of the snake, etc., their cognitions too are negated.

Further, the illumination of the superimposed cannot be due to the witness manifest in the “this”-form valid cognition *vr̥tti* alone. If this were the case then, since the witness is always non-negatable, and the “this”-form *vr̥tti*, being the transformation of the *antaḥ-karaṇa*, is also not negatable in the conventional sense; then the negation of the cognition of the superimposed would not occur without the knowledge of Brahman.

⁴²⁵ Nīścaldās provides a detailed refutation of the fourth view of superimposition in *VP* 7.38, 272-4.

Wrapping up the discussion on erroneous cognition in Vedānta, Nīścaldās sums up these four positions. Wherever erroneous cognition pertaining to snake, silver, etc., occurs, *anirvacanīya-khyāti* alone is accepted, and the four views may be summarized as follows. KCNB holds that the contact of a defective sense with the substratum alone is the cause of superimposition, and the general cognition of the substratum is not the cause (view 1 above). In the other teachers' views, the general cognition of the substratum alone is the cause of superimposition. General cognition is also called substantive cognition (*dharmi-jñāna*). The remaining three views all are variants of this DJV (*dharmi-jñāna-vāda*). Of these three DJV views, only one is proper, namely view 3: "the erroneous cognition is of the form of a *vr̥tti* of ignorance (*avidyā*) in the shape of the superimposed object." View 2, "the *vr̥tti* is in the form of 'this' pertaining to the substratum as well as in the form of the superimposed as a transformation of *avidyā*," and view 4, "only the general cognition is required, which is of the form of a 'this'-*vr̥tti* and is the cause of the superimposition; there is no acceptance of the ignorance-*vr̥tti* pertaining to the superimposed," are improper.

Nīścaldās concludes the discussion of *anirvacanīya-khyāti*, saying "We have clarified the merits and demerits according to the ancient authors themselves. If it be considered independently, all four views have similar merits and demerits. In truth, the intent of Advaita is only to demonstrate the unreality of empirical world, there is no purpose apart from this in propounding or refuting subdivisions (*avāntara bheda*). Thus, even if some refuted view alone were established in a seeker's intellect, there would be no harm. But here we have provided the reasoning only according to one view in order to prevent [a seeker] from going off on a wrong path, other than the way [shown by] the ancient teachers (*prācīna ācārya*)."⁴²⁶ If an incorrect model of superimposition succeeds in delivering the knowledge of non-duality, then there is no harm done! Nīścaldās then provides a closing verse (*dohā*):⁴²⁷

*nīscala-bina kinahu na likhī, bhāṣā maiṃ yaha rīti;
khyāti anirvacanīya kī pekahu sujana saprīti.*

⁴²⁶ VP 7.39, 275: *is rīti saiṃ prācīna-granthakāroṃ naiṃ jo likhyā hai, tiske anusāra hī hamnaiṃ dūṣaṇa-bhūṣaṇa likhe haiṃ. apanem buddhi ke bala saiṃ vicāra karaīṃ tau in cāroṃ matan maiṃ dūṣaṇa-bhūṣaṇa samāna haiṃ. au prapañca ke mithyātva sādhanā maiṃ advaita-vāda kī abhiniveśa hai, avāntara-mata-bheda ke pratipādana maiṃ vā kaṇḍana maiṃ abhiniveśa nahīṃ, yātaiṃ kisī jījñāsū kūṃ kaṇḍita pakṣa hī buddhi maiṃ ārūḍha hoiṃ tau kachu hāni nahīṃ au ekahī mata ke anukūla hamnaiṃ yukti likhī haiṃ so prācīna ācāryana ke mārge saiṃ utpatha-gamana ke nirodhārtha likhī haiṃ.*

⁴²⁷ In VP, there are only three *dohās*. Besides this one, the other two occur at 1.1 and 8.28.

Apart from Nīścaldās, no one has written in this manner in the vernacular
On *anirvacanīya khyāti*. Look at [it] with favor, good people.

We turn next to Nīścaldās's examination of five non-Advaita theories of erroneous cognition (*khyāti-vāda*) and their inadequacies as compared to *anirvacanīya-khyāti*.

6.3.2 *Sat-khyāti-vāda*, The Theory that the Object of Erroneous Cognition is Real

The proponent of *sat-khyāti*,⁴²⁸ the theory that the object of erroneous cognition is real, holds that, along with the components of mother-of-pearl, the components of silver also are ever present, and these too are real, not false. By the contact with defective eyes, real silver arises from the real silver components. By the cognition of mother-of-pearl, the destruction of the real silver into its components occurs. This view is to be refuted by Vedānta because the aim of the mother-of-pearl-silver example is simply to allow inference of the unreality (*mithyātva*) of the created world. But the silver in mother-of-pearl is real according to the theory of *sat-khyāti*, and so, taking it up as an example, one would be unable to establish the unreality of the world. The defect of this theory is that after the proper cognition of mother-of-pearl, the non-existence of silver in mother-of-pearl is apprehended in all three times (past, present and future). According to Advaita, the *anirvacanīya* silver is only present in the mother-of-pearl in the present, but the real (*vyāvahārika*) silver is absent [in the mother-of-pearl] in all three times, which is why the real silver is not opposed by the illusory silver. But if, according to *sat-khyāti*, real silver resides in mother-of-pearl, then, at that very moment [when the mother-of-pearl is cognized], the absence of real silver should not be possible. But the latter is true, so to say that real silver is present is incorrect. Further, in Advaita, there is no need for any apparatus to produce the *anirvacanīya* silver, since its arising is possible merely due to defective senses and ignorance. But the production of real silver is not possible without the use of a well-known apparatus, and, since there is no such apparatus in mother-of-pearl, the production of silver in mother-of-pearl is false (*VP* 7.41-2, 276-7).

The *sat-khyāti* proponent claims that despite the silver in mother-of-pearl being illusory (*prātibhāsika*), it is empirically real. Either the silver disappears in the instant after the silver-cognition disappears, or else the silver disappears on account of the cognition of mother-of-

⁴²⁸ The proponents of *sat-khyāti-vāda* are not named by Nīścaldās, but include the Viśiṣṭādvaita followers of Rāmānuja.

pearl or some other object, this cognition being the cause of the disappearance of the silver-cognition. The silver-cognition and the silver disappear in the same instant. However, even if this is accepted, the *sat-khyāti-vāda* is still defective. If, at the very instant when there is erroneous cognition of silver in mother-of-pearl, the mother-of-pearl comes in contact with fire and in the next instant is destroyed leaving behind only ashes, then there is no means for the cessation of silver-cognition and silver should be obtained, because the silver substance possesses luminosity (*taijasa*) and cannot be destroyed.⁴²⁹ Thus, according to Nīścaldās, the *sat-khyāti* theory that “in the location of erroneous cognition, empirically real silver is perceived” is always incorrect.

Moreover, in the case where ten persons erroneously see diverse objects in one and the same rope, such as a stick, a garland, a snake, a stream of water, etc., the components of all these objects cannot possibly be present in the limited space of the rope, because material substances (*mūrta dravya*) occupy space. As the components of all these objects cannot remain in the small location of erroneous cognition, namely, the rope, how can they even be possible? In the [Advaita] doctrine (*siddhānta*), since the stick, etc., are *anirvacanīya*, they do not occupy any empirical space. If *sat-khyāti* were also not to accept the space-constraint effects of the erroneous cognitions such as stick, etc., then it would be futile and contrary to consider them real. Thus, according to Nīścaldās, only *anirvacanīya-khyāti* is resoundingly (*balātkāra se*) proven because the stick, etc., are only apprehended and have no other demonstrable effect.

If the arising of a real object in the location of erroneous cognition were indeed accepted, as a result, if the erroneous cognition of water were to occur in salty soil with heated coals, then the coals would be extinguished by the erroneous water. If fire were erroneously cognized in a mass of *guñjā* berries⁴³⁰ held above cotton (*tūla*), the cotton would get burnt. If it is said that an object arising due to a defective cause is not apprehended by others, but only by the one whose defect caused the object, then the erroneously cognized water and fire in these instances lack wetness and burning capacity. Thus, Nīścaldās suggests that to call the

⁴²⁹ Nīścaldās appears to be using a Nyāya argument here: *tejas* is a substance (*dravya*) in Nyāya, and metals are a special category under it: gold, and presumably by extension, silver are non-earth-like minerals that cannot be destroyed. See *TS* 12 (Annambhaṭṭa and Govardhanamīra 1963, 8, 111-4) and *EIP* (6:145-6).

⁴³⁰ *Abrus precatorius*, commonly known as Indian Licorice, Rosary Pea, Crab’s Eyes, Precatory pea/bean, is bright red in color and is held to convey the illusion of the vine being on fire when seen at a distance.

erroneously cognized objects real is merely a cause for ridicule, since on one hand, the components do not have any spatial constraints, and on the other hand, the whole object is incapable of exerting any effect.

Nīścaldās concludes that *sat-khyāti-vāda* is not possible in any manner, and is always unreasonable. He writes that he made no mention of *sat-khyāti* in *VS*, because only a position that can somehow be explained and be fit for refutation by logic is worth describing. Although *sat-khyāti* is completely untenable, however, if it were not described anywhere, the reader might conclude that the author was not aware of *sat-khyāti*. Therefore, Nīścaldās says he has written about *sat-khyāti* here only to dispel this incorrect conclusion (*VP* 7.46, 280-1).⁴³¹

6.3.3 *Asat-khyāti-vāda*, The Theory that the Object of Erroneous Cognition is Unreal

Nīścaldās considers the *asat-khyāti* theory, that the object of erroneous cognition is unreal, also to be totally devoid of reason and counter to experience. Although he feels this view is not even worthy of denial, this theory is well known as a rival (*prati-dvandvin*) of the Vedas, and its refutation has also been explained in the *Brahma-sūtra*. Therefore, the refutation of *asat-khyāti* is necessary here.

There are two proponents of *asat-khyāti*; one of them is the heterodox Mādhyamika Buddhists (*nāstika-sūnya-vādī*),⁴³² according to whom, all objects are unreal (*asat*); therefore, leave alone the silver in mother-of-pearl, even the mother-of-pearl itself is non-existent. There is false silver [projected] on a false substratum; therefore, all erroneous cognition is without basis (*niradhiṣṭhāna*), and its knower, knowledge, etc., are all unreal. This view has been refuted at length in the *BS* 2.2, *tarka-pāda* section,⁴³³ and is always contrary to experience. It posits that everything is nothing but void (*śūnya*), and therefore, no empirical practice should be provable. If the void were empirical then fire could be used in place of

⁴³¹ “*sat-khyāti-vāda kā upapādan nahīṇ sambhavai, yātaiṃ isa grantha maiṃ bhī lekhanīya nahīṃ, tathāpi sarvathā likhe vinā adhyetā kūṃ aisā bhram hoy jāvai [ki] grantha-kartā kūṃ sat-khyāti-vāda kā jñān nahīṃ thā. tis bhrama kī nivṛtti vāstai ihāṃ likhyā hai*” (*VP* 7.46, 281). Arguments refuting the apparatus of real silver in mother-of-pearl (*VP* 7. 43-5, 277-80) have not been presented here.

⁴³² One must bear in mind that what follow is Nīścaldās (and the Advaita school’s) view of Buddhism. As Srinivasa Rao states, “many non-Buddhist philosophical works contain an account of *Asat-khyāti* and *Ātma-khyāti* as a *pūrvapakṣa* [*prima facie* viewpoint] which they all subsequently refute; but none of these works contain any account of the answers given by the Buddhists in defence [*sic*] of their position. ... An important issue that emerges from the above is whether the Buddhists did actually hold these theories attributed to them by their rival schools” (1998, 48).

⁴³³ Specifically, *BS* 2.2, *adhikaraṇa* 5, vv. 28-32.

water, and vice versa, since water and fire are neither real nor false, but simply non-existent. There is only the void element (*tattva*) which is the same everywhere and has no particulars. If particularity were accepted in the void, then the posited view would be defective, since the particular itself would be different from the void.

It may be argued that “there is a particular in the void which is called variety (*vilakṣaṇatā*), by means of which empirical differences occur. But ultimately, that variety, the empirical practice derived from it, and the agent of the empirical act, all are void. Therefore, there is no defect.” This too is not possible because it is contradictory even to say that there is particularity in the void. By admitting to the void, particularity is relinquished, and then empirical differentiation is not possible. Thus, Mādhyamika is false (*alīka*).

The other proponents of *asat-khyāti* are some followers of Tantra (*tantrik*). According to them, empirical objects are not unreal; only the objects of erroneous cognition which Advaita considers *anirvacanīya*, such as silver, etc., are unreal. Therefore, even though empirical silver, etc., are in their own place, they have no relation with mother-of-pearl. Unlike [the Nyāya theory of] *anyathā-khyāti*, silver-ness is not apprehended in mother-of-pearl. Nor is *anirvacanīya* silver produced in mother-of-pearl, nor do two cognitions arise (as in *akhyāti*), nor are the mother-of-pearl, cognizer and cognition all unreal (as in Mādhyamika). Instead, mother-of-pearl, its cognizer, cognition, etc., are real; however, when defective eyes come in contact with mother-of-pearl, then the mother-of-pearl is not cognized, and therefore, only the apprehension of unreal silver takes place in the location of mother-of-pearl. In *anyathā-khyāti* too, since the silver in the location of mother-of-pearl is held to be unreal, while the silver in a mine or market is considered real, these two views appear to be similar. But in *anyathā-khyāti*, the silver-ness in real silver in another location is considered to appear in the mother-of-pearl, whereas in the [*tantrik*] *asat-khyāti*, although real silver in another location has been accepted, the appearance of its silver-ness in the mother-of-pearl location is not accepted; instead, only an unreal cognition of silver is believed to occur. Wherever the contact of defective eyes occurs with mother-of-pearl and the erroneous cognition of silver arises, the object of that cognition is neither just mother-of-pearl, nor just silver. Moreover, as soon as mother-of-pearl is cognized, in the very next instant it is known that “there is no silver here in all three times [past, present and future].” The erroneous cognition of silver,

lacking an object, is considered unreal, and this unreal cognition is called *asat-khyāti* (VP 7.48, 282-3).

There is also the *asat-khyāti* theory, held by the author of the *Nyāya-vācaspatya*.⁴³⁴ Where erroneous cognition of silver occurs at the moment of eye contact with mother-of-pearl, the object of the erroneous cognition is mother-of-pearl, but, because of the defect [in the eye], both the mother-of-pearl-ness in mother-of-pearl, as well as the inherence of mother-of-pearl-ness in mother-of-pearl, are not visible. Instead, the inherence of silver-ness appears in mother-of-pearl, where it is not actually present. The inherence (*samavāya*) between silver-ness as adjunct (*rajatatva-pratīyogika*) and mother-of-pearl as locus (*śukty-anuyogika*) is always unknown and unreal; thus, its apprehension is termed *asat-khyāti*. Although the inherence of silver-ness in silver, where silver-ness is the adjunct (*pratīyogin*), is well known, and the inherence of mother-of-pearl-ness as the adjunct in mother-of-pearl as the locus (*anuyogin*) is also well known, silver-ness as adjunct (*rajatatva-pratīyogika*) is only well known in the case of inherence in silver as the locus (*anuyogin*) and not in mother-of-pearl. Thus, since inherence where silver-ness is the *pratīyogin* and mother-of-pearl is the locus is not well known (*aprasiddha*), it is unreal and its apprehension is called *asat-khyāti*. That of which mother-of-pearl is the locus, i.e., the property-possessor (*dharmin*), is called inherence where mother-of-pearl is the locus (*śukty-anuyogika samavāya*); that of which silver-ness is an adjunct, i.e., a property (*dharma*), is called inherence where silver-ness is the adjunct (*rajatatva-pratīyogika samavāya*). Inherence is also known to have the property of inherence-ness (*samavāyatva*). Just as inherence is known to possess silver-ness-as-adjunct-ness (*rajatatva-pratīyogikatva*), it is also known to possess mother-of-pearl-as-subjunct-ness (*śukty-anuyogikatva*). However, since both these properties are never established as occurring in one location and in one and the same inherence, it is unreal. Such an apprehension, according to the author of the *Nyāya-vācaspatya*, is *asat-khyāti* (VP 7.49, 283-4).

According to Nīścaldās, even these two *asat-khyāti* views presented above [the *tantrik* and the *Nyāya-vācaspatya* versions] are improper. Those who accept *asat-khyāti* must be asked, “In the phrase “*asat-khyāti*,” does the word “*asat*, unreal” mean 1) “not non-

⁴³⁴ This appears to be a reference to the entry on *asat-khyāti* in the Sanskrit lexicon, the *Vācaspatyam* (1962, 1:531-9), by Tārānātha Tarkavācaspati Bhaṭṭācārya (1812-1885 CE).

negatable,” or 2) “without form (*svarūpa*)?” If the response is that the word “*asat*” means “without form” (2), then to accept *asat-khyāti* would be the cause for shamelessness, similar to saying “there is no tongue in my mouth.” Only that which is without being and manifestation is termed formless; therefore, the proponents of *asat-khyāti* merely establish, “That which is without being and manifestation can be apprehended.” Such a statement is always wrong, like “the son of a barren woman.” If *asat* means “not non-negatable” (1), that means “negatable,” i.e., capable of being negated. This establishes that the apprehension of that which is capable of negation is termed *asat-khyāti*, and that is exactly what Advaita doctrine (*siddhānta*) accepts. The term *anirvacanīya* means that which is capable of negation; thus, it cannot be said that *asat-khyāti* is different from *anirvacanīya-khyāti* (VP 7.50, 284).

6.3.4 *Ātma-khyāti-vāda*, The Theory that the Object of Erroneous Cognition is a Mental State Projected by the Self

Nīścaldās writes that *ātma-khyāti*, the theory that the object of erroneous cognition is a mental state projected by the self, is the view of the Vijñānavādins, Yogācāra Buddhists who consider the transient consciousness (*kṣaṇika-vijñāna*) as *ātmā*.⁴³⁵ In their view, the silver, etc., are not external. Instead, the transient consciousness (*ātmā*), is internal, and silver, etc., are its properties (*dharma*), which are seen as external on account of defects. Except for the Mādhyamikas (*śūnya-vādī*), no follower of the Buddhists disagrees with the internal reality of objects. Some Buddhists accept that objects are external and some do not; but, except for the Mādhyamikas,⁴³⁶ none of the heterodox followers (*nāstika*) denies internal consciousness.

The proponents’ view [as presented by Nīścaldās] is that, in *ātma-khyāti*, the *ātmā*, in the form of consciousness (*vijñāna*), is the substratum of the internal silver, and the internal silver is its property, but, due to defect (*doṣa*), it is apprehended as external. Through cognition, the silver is not negated (*bādhā*) in essence (*svarūpa*), but only its externality is negated. In *anirvacanīya-khyāti*, one has to accept the negation of the property-possessor (*dharmin*), silver, as external, and also the negation of its external *vyrtti* in the form of “this-ness”; but in *ātma-khyāti* only the external “this-ness” is negated since the internal reality of

⁴³⁵ Per Srinivasa Rao, “*Ātma-khyāti* appears to be one more attempt at crude deduction from the general position of the Vijñānavādins which is made by the critics rather than it being a position actually evolved and advocated by Vijñānavādins themselves” (1998, 53). Also see n. 432.

⁴³⁶ The Mādhyamikas are held to ascribe to *asat-khyāti*, as just seen in the previous section.

silver is not disputed. So if *anirvacanīya-khyāti* is accepted, then from the standpoint of *ātma-khyāti*, there is the defect of lack of economy (*gaṛava*) in the conceptualization of the negation of both the property-possessor (*dharmīn*) and the property (*dharma*). *Ātma-khyāti* has economy in that only the *dharma* of the external “this-ness” needs to be negated. Internally, the silver is real; there is only erroneous cognition in apprehending it as external (*VP* 7.51, 284-5).

Nīścaldās considers this view to be incorrect, because no one experiences silver as internal. Also, the interiority of silver, etc., whether real or erroneous, cannot be established by any *pramāṇa*. Everyone experiences pleasure, etc., as internal, and silver, etc., as external. To accept silver as internal is against one’s experience, and there is no means of valid cognition nor reasoning to prove interiority; therefore, to accept silver as internal and its apprehension as external is totally improper (*VP* 7.52, 285).

Nīścaldās states that there are two schools of Buddhists (*saugata*); one is the Yogācāra, which holds to internal consciousness alone as real, and the other⁴³⁷ which accepts external objects as real. Among those who accept external objects, there are two views. 1) External objects are only inferable, and not perceptible; only their cognition is directly perceived (*pratyakṣa*), and from the cognition the cognized object is inferred. External objects are only mediately perceived (*parokṣa*). 2) The objects of defective perceptual cognition are external; they are immediate (*aparokṣa*). In contrast to these two views, for Yogācāra, even the empirical silver is not external, regardless of whether it is mediately or immediately cognized. Nīścaldās then provides a description of the defects in the view of the Buddhist proponent of immediate cognition of external objects, presented from the standpoint of the proponent of internal consciousness (*viññāna*). The two factions do not disagree about the internal reality of objects.

For those who hold immediate cognition of real external objects (2), since the silver which is the object of the real (*yathārtha*) cognition is external on account of defects, the flaw incurred by the proponents of internal consciousness (*viññāna*) of the internal silver being counter to experience is not an issue. However, there is no utility to their accepting the externality of silver in erroneous cognition since a bracelet or such cannot be made from that

⁴³⁷ Nīścaldās does not name this other Buddhist school, so it is unclear whom he is referring to.

silver but can only be apprehended. However, since apprehension does not take place without an object, although the result (*phala*) of the erroneous cognition of that silver is the demonstration (*siddhi*) of its object-ness, even if the silver were considered internal, the object-ness of the erroneous cognition would be demonstrated. Therefore, if the object-ness of the erroneous cognition is considered to be demonstrated by considering the silver to be external on account of defect, then, by accepting the negation of both the property and property-possessor, as mentioned earlier, the proponent of external objects incurs the flaw of lack-of-economy (*gaṛava*). If, according to the view of the proponents of internal consciousness (*viññāna*), the defect-caused external apprehension of the internal silver is accepted, there is economy due to accepting the negation of only the “this-ness” property (*dharma*).

There are also other defects that are incurred by the view of the proponent of external objects. 1) Silver, which is the object of true cognition tends to be before one’s eyes, but, if the silver of erroneous cognition also occurs before one’s eyes, then what possible difference can there be between the real and erroneous cognition? 2) If it be held that, on account of a defect, the silver that exists as a real object of cognition before one’s eyes appears internally as an object of erroneous cognition, then, due to the difference in interiority and exteriority of the object, there will arise the difference of reality and falseness between cognitions. 3) If the external arising of the object of erroneous cognition is agreed to, then the silver arisen in the mother-of-pearl should be visible to all. 4) Where ten persons have different erroneous cognitions on the same substratum, all persons should see all those objects there. Contrary to this, in the view of the proponent of internal consciousness (*viññāna*), only the person to whom the object arises internally can apprehend the object before his eyes, and therefore, another person can have no doubt regarding its apprehension (*VP* 7.53, 286-7).

Then follows a refutation of *ātma-khyāti* from the Vedānta perspective.⁴³⁸ The interiority of objects is only known in dreams, and not in the waking state. So to conceive of objects that are external in nature as internal objects is a defect of unknown conception (*aprasiddha kalpanā doṣa*). If objects were internal, then one ought to perceive, “the silver is in me,” or “I am silver,” and the external perception of silver as “this is silver” should not occur.

⁴³⁸ Compare Padmapāda & Prakāśātman’s refutation of *ātma-khyāti* in the *Pañcapādikā* and *Vivaraṇa* respectively (Padmapādācārya et al. 1992, 92-4).

The *ātma-khyāti* proponent may respond as follows. “Although silver is internal and not external, the external arising of internal objects is seen due to the power of defects. Although the external “this-ness” is in mother-of-pearl, due to the power of the defect, the “this-ness” resident in mother-of-pearl appears in silver. The defect that causes internal silver to arise externally also causes the mother-of-pearl’s “this-ness” to be seen in the externally arisen silver. Real silver is not possible externally and in an erroneous place; therefore, it will have to be considered *anirvacanīya*. Such *anirvacanīya* objects do not occur in the world, so the fallacy of unknown conception (*aprasiddha kalpanā doṣa*) arises [in the *anirvacanīya-khyāti* position]. In our [*ātma-khyāti*] opinion, the real silver is internal; therefore, its appropriation and relinquishing (*hāna upādāna*) are impossible. Moreover, by considering it internally real, the absence of silver changing to bracelets etc., is still possible. *Ātma-khyāti* has the advantage of economy (*lāghava*) over *anirvacanīya-khyāti*, since one does not have to imagine *anirvacanīya* objects.”

Nīścaldās rejects this argument. If one says that “the ‘this-ness’ of mother-of-pearl is apprehended in silver,” one accepts *anyathā-khyāti*. If *anyathā-khyāti* is considered in the apprehension of the “this-ness,” then, in the *anyathā-khyāti* fashion, one should also accept the apprehension of that which possesses silver-ness (*rajatatva-dharmi*) in mother-of-pearl. [*Anyathā-khyāti* considers the silver erroneously cognized in mother-of-pearl to be real but present elsewhere]. But then it is futile to accept the internal arising of silver. If it is argued that “just as the silver is separate from mother-of-pearl, it is not possible for the qualities of silver to be apprehended in mother-of-pearl,” then, even in the *ātma-khyāti* view, the silver is separate from mother-of-pearl and internally located, so even in that internal silver, there is the similar defect of the impossibility of the apprehension of mother-of-pearl’s “this-ness” property (*VP* 7.54, 287-8).

In response, Nīścaldās further clarifies the *anirvacanīya-khyāti* position. In Advaita, there arises an *anirvacanīya* relation of the identity (*tādātmya*) of the mother-of-pearl *vṛtti* with silver. This is called relational superimposition (*saṃsargādhyāsa*). Where the relation residing in the substratum is apprehended in the superimposed object, the relational superimposition of the entire substratum occurs. The properties (*dharma*) of one object cannot be apprehended in another without relational superimposition. Without superimposition, the apprehension of the “this-ness” residing in mother-of-pearl in internally

occurring silver is not possible; hence, *ātma-khyāti* is improper. Further, the flaw of an unknown conception (*aprasiddha kalpanā doṣa*) in connection with the *anirvacanīya* object that was raised by the *ātma-khyāti* proponent is based in ignorance, because the primary view (*mukhya siddhānta*) of Advaita is as follows.

There is only one (*ekamātra*) consciousness and it is real, the entire creation (*prapañca*) apart from consciousness is false. *Anirvacanīya* is the same as illusory (*mithyā*); therefore, to call any object other than consciousness real incurs the defect of unknown conception (*aprasiddha kalpanā doṣa*). *Anirvacanīya*-ness is extremely well known in objects other than consciousness. If it be contemplated through logic (*yukti*), the nature (*svarūpa*) of any object other than *ātmā* is not known; rather, the object is apprehended despite its nature being unknown. That is why all objects other than *ātmā* are *anirvacanīya*. In Advaita, any object other than *ātmā* is not real, in fact the entire creation is of the nature of “barely seen, then gone (*dr̥ṣṭa-naṣṭa*),” just like an imaginary city in the sky (*gandharva-nagara*). There is no difference at all between objects in a dream and those in the waking state. Even so, the silver in mother-of-pearl is illusory and that in a mineshaft, etc., is empirically real. This difference between non-*ātmā* objects as real and illusory is merely for the sake of facilitating entry into the knowledge of Advaita for those seekers whose intellect is dull (*sthūla-buddhi*),⁴³⁹ analogous to the manner in which the Arundhatī star is pointed out (*arundhatī-nyāya*).⁴⁴⁰ If one whose intellect is dull is told the doctrine right at the outset, then the person who holds that non-*ātmā* objects are real, on hearing the remarkable meaning of the doctrine, might become averse to the scriptures (*śāstra*) and stray from the goal of liberation (*puruṣārtha*). Therefore, non-*ātmā* objects are said to have a two-fold reality, empirical and illusory, while consciousness has ultimate reality. When the lesser reality of the created world (*prapañca*) relative to consciousness has been established in one’s intellect by the example of the dream and by the negating statements (*niṣedha-vākya*) of Vedānta, then one learns that all non-*ātmā* objects are illusory and bereft of reality and manifestation (*sattā-sphūrṭi-śūnya*). With this

⁴³⁹ Colloquially, *sthūla-buddhi* = dull-witted, dense. The English literal translation “fat-head” could also stand in.

⁴⁴⁰ Arundhatī Nyāya alludes to the method of leading one to a subtle object through easy and gradual steps. Arundhatī is faint star, situated just to the east of the Vasiṣṭha star in the Saptarṣi constellation. In order to view Arundhatī, its location is first determined by looking at the brighter star Vasiṣṭha beside it, then if one looks carefully one can see Arundhatī, Vasiṣṭha’s wife, close by. In Western astronomy, the Saptarṣi is the Big Dipper or Ursa Majoris, Vasiṣṭha is the star Mizar (apparent magnitude 2.23), the second star from the end of the Big Dipper’s handle. Arundhatī is Alcor (apparent magnitude 3.99; the smaller the apparent magnitude, the brighter the star).

intent alone, the Advaita *śāstra* speaks of the different orders of reality, and not with the intent of distinguishing between non-*ātmā* objects as either empirical or illusory. Therefore, to state that “*anirvacanīya* objects are unknown in Advaita” is contrary, and, since the elucidation of non-duality (*advaita*) by any other means is not possible, to talk of economy or lack thereof (*lāghava-gaurava*) in this context is based in error (*bhrama-mūlaka*). If there were some means possible other than *anirvacanīya-khyāti*, then, in view of the flaw of lack of economy, this view could be renounced. But there is no other possible theory of error [starting with *sat-khyāti* and including the others yet to be discussed]; hence, it is unproductive to talk of economy or lack thereof (*VP* 7.55, 288-9).

“Unproductive” as it may be, Nīscaldās still refutes the “lack of economy” flaw ascribed to *anirvacanīya-khyāti* by the *ātmā-khyāti* proponent. “If the external arising of silver be accepted, then there is lack of economy in accepting the negation (*bādhā*) of the property-possessor (*dharmin*), silver, and the property (*dharma*), ‘this-ness;’ whereas, if only the external apprehension of internal silver is accepted, then there is economy by the negation of only ‘this-ness.’” Nīscaldās dismisses this statement as insignificant (*akiñcitkara*). Everyone is familiar with the experience of the negation of silver upon the cognition of mother-of-pearl as “I had only apprehended false silver.” But according to *ātmā-khyāti*, this ought to be “I had only apprehended false externality in silver,” and no one has experienced such negation. If the negation of the property-possessor is dropped (*lopa*) merely from a desire for [logical] economy, that is as ridiculous as taking up only some single action from among the collective actions facilitating the result of cooking, etc., (*pākādi-phala-sādhaka vyāpāra-samūha*), for economy sake (*lāghava-bala se*), and renouncing all other actions. Moreover, when an authoritative person (*āpta*) instructs a deluded one, he negates the silver by its nature (*svarūpa*) itself, “this is not silver; rather, this is mother-of-pearl.” But according to *ātmā-khyāti*, only the external location of the silver should be negated, “there is no silver here [externally], rather the silver is internal to you” (*VP* 7.56, 289-90).

Nīscaldās concludes that the *ātmā-khyāti* view of the Buddhist who holds that objects are external, namely, “the misperception (*khyāti*) of silver arisen in the *ātmā* has occurred externally,” is incorrect. This *ātmā-khyāti* view belongs to the one who holds the internal consciousness (*viññāna*) alone, namely, “apart from consciousness (*viññāna*), there is no object external or internal, instead all objects are solely forms of consciousness (*viññāna-rūpa*)

ātmā). Therefore, the [mis]perception (*khyāti*) is of consciousness in the form of silver,” it too is improper, because silver is different from consciousness (*viññāna*) and is an object of cognition. It is not possible to state that silver is identical to consciousness as *ātmā*. Further, upon accepting the view of the Viññānavādins that all objects are momentary forms of consciousness, endless defects (*dūṣaṇa*) such as the impossibility of re-cognition (*pratyabhijñā*), etc., are incurred. Thus, *ātma-khyāti* is not possible (*VP* 7.57, 290-91).

6.3.5 *Anyathā-khyāti-vāda*, The Theory that the Object of Erroneous Cognition is Real, but is Present Elsewhere

Now Nīścaldās takes up the Nyāya *anyathā-khyāti* theory, that the object of erroneous cognition is real, but is present elsewhere. In Nīścaldās’s time, the Nyāya school was the main rival of Advaita, and hence, compared to the three theories of error considered thus far, he spends considerably more time addressing the Nyāya theory that the objects of erroneous perception are real. He provides a statement of the *anyathā-khyāti* theory from the Nyāya perspective (section 6.3.5.1), followed by a preliminary refutation from the Vedānta perspective (section 6.3.5.2), which he elaborates on in great detail later, both from within the Nyāya framework, and also from the Advaita standpoint (sections 6.3.5.5 and 6.3.5.6 respectively). Before doing so, however, Nīścaldās first provides a thorough overview of the Nyāya conception of relations, particularly extraordinary relations (*alaukika sambandha*) (section 6.3.5.3), followed by a detailed presentation of the Nyāya arguments against *anirvacanīya-khyāti* (section 6.3.5.4).

6.3.5.1 Nīścaldās’s presentation of *anyathā-khyāti-vāda*

According to *anyathā-khyāti-vāda*, a person has impressions (*saṃskāra*) that are generated by the experience of real objects. When a person’s defective eyes come in contact with an object similar to that previously seen, the recollection (*smṛti*) of the previously seen object arises due to the general cognition (*sāmānya jñāna*) of the similar object that is before one’s eyes. Alternatively, if one chooses not to accept recollection, the impressions of the previously seen object arise. The property (*dharma*) of that recollected object, or of the object whose impressions arise, is apprehended in the object before one. For example, when a person has previously had impressions generated by an experience with real silver and subsequently his defective eyes come in contact with mother-of-pearl, which resembles

silver, he recalls silver, and the silver-ness property then appears in the mother-of-pearl. Or, since there is no delay between the contact of defective eyes with mother-of-pearl and the erroneous cognition of silver, the recollection of silver does not arise in the time in between, but instead the impressions of the experience of silver arise and then, without any interruption (*vyavadhāna*) by a recollection, the silver-ness property is promptly perceived in mother-of-pearl. In the case of recollection, the impressions arise due to the cognition of similarity to that seen before. In a similar manner, in the case of an erroneous cognition, as soon as the senses contact with an object similar to that seen before, the impressions arise and the property (*dharma*) connected with the impressions appears in the object that is before one's eyes. In reality, there is the mother-of-pearl-ness property in mother-of-pearl, not silver-ness, but, in the case of an erroneous cognition, the mother-of-pearl is apprehended with [the property of] silver-ness. An object is being apprehended here in another (*anyathā*) form, hence this is called *anyathā-khyāti* (VP 7.57, 290-1).

6.3.5.2 Nīścaldās's preliminary refutation of *anyathā-khyāti*

Although many Naiyāyika authors have described *anyathā-khyāti* as “the apprehension of the silver-ness property in mother-of-pearl,” Nīścaldās considers their view to be not worthy of belief because it is opposed to revealed and secondary scriptures (*śruti-smṛti-viruddha*). The Naiyāyikas call a dream-cognition a mental misapprehension (*mānasa-viparyaya*), whereas *anyathā-khyāti* is simply termed misapprehension. But, in *śruti*, the arising of dream objects has been described differently: “There are no chariots or teams of horses or roads there, but he creates [for himself] chariots, team-horses and roads. *na tatra rathā na rathayogā na panthāno bhavantyatha rathān rathayogān panthaḥ sṛjate*” (BU 4.3.10). Here, *śruti* negates empirical chariots, horses and roads and then mentions the creation of *anirvacanīya* chariots, horses and roads. They have not been called mental errors. The creation of *anirvacanīya* objects in a dream is similarly stated in the *smṛti*: “In the intermediate stage [between waking and deep sleep] there is [a real] creation; because [*śruti*] says so, *sandhye sṛṣṭirāha hi*” (BS 3.2.1).

[The Naiyāyikas consider the silver misperceived in mother-of-pearl to be real, but present elsewhere]. But, by logic too, the cognition in mother-of-pearl of silver-ness of silver that is distant from the eyes is not possible. If the silver were close to the mother-of-pearl,

then perhaps after the eyes come in contact with both, the erroneous cognition of silver-ness residing in silver might possibly be produced in mother-of-pearl. But where there is no silver in proximity to mother-of-pearl, how can an erroneous cognition of silver be produced in mother-of-pearl by the eyes? [According to the Nyāya view of perception,] first, the senses contact the qualifier (*viśeṣaṇa*) and qualificand (*viśeṣya*), and only then does the cognition of the qualified (*viśiṣṭa*) occur. Where there is real silver, the silver-ness is the qualifier, and the manifestation in the form of silver is the qualified. Then the eyes have a contact-relation (*saṃyoga-sambandha*) with the silver-manifestation, and with silver-ness it is “a relation with the inherence in that which is in contact” (*saṃyukta-samavāya-sambandha*). But when there is an erroneous cognition qualified by silver-ness with regards to the mother-of-pearl, although the eyes are in contact-relation with the qualified [that is] the mother-of-pearl manifestation, there is no *saṃyukta-samavāya-sambandha* with the silver-ness qualification. If the eyes were in contact with the silver-manifestation, such a relation could arise, but here, due to the absence of contact with the silver-manifestation, the absence of the *saṃyukta-samavāya-sambandha* with silver-ness is but natural; it is not possible to have cognition of mother-of-pearl qualified by silver-ness (*VP* 7.59, 292-3). Hence, the erroneous cognition of mother-of-pearl as silver cannot be possible in the manner of *anyathā-khyāti*.⁴⁴¹

6.3.5.3 Types of relations (*sambandha*), according to Nyāya

According to Nyāya, the appearance of silver-ness, which is present in another location, in the mother-of-pearl before one occurs by means of an extraordinary relation. Hence Nīścaldās presents a review of the Nyāya perspective concerning the cause of perceptual cognition. Perceptual cognition is held to be of two kinds: 1) ordinary (*laukika*) [which was described earlier, in *VP* 1.14-15, 22-6],⁴⁴² and 2) extraordinary (*alaukika*). Extraordinary relations are of three kinds of: 2a) Universal relations (*sāmānya-lakṣaṇa*), 2b) *Jñāna-lakṣaṇa*, a relation to “[the] here and now of the features of a thing which was known

⁴⁴¹ The refutation of the Old Nyāya view of *anyathā-khyāti* (*VP* 7.58, 291-2) which was also described in *VS* 4.128,74 is not reproduced here.

⁴⁴² The six kinds of ordinary relations were earlier described in the section on perception (*VP* 1.14-15, 22-6). They are: 1) Conjunction (*saṃyoga*) of the senses with the object; 2) Inherence in the conjoined (*saṃyukta-samavāya*), e.g., the color blue in the pot; 3) Inherence in the one inhering in the conjoined (*saṃyukta-samaveta-samavāya*), e.g., the blueness inhering in the blue color in the pot; 4) Inherence (*samavāya*), e.g., *śabda*, sound in *ākāśa*; 5) Inherence in the one inhering (*samaveta-samavāya*), e.g., *śabdatva* in *ākāśa*; 6) Adjectivality to the conjoined (*saṃyukta-viśeṣanātā*), e.g., non-existence of an object in its locus. See also *Six Ways of Knowing*, Datta, D. M (1990, 89-90).

previously at another place and time” (*EIP* 6:61), and 2c) *Yoga-janya-dharma-lakṣaṇa*, relation to that which is learned of via supernatural faculties.⁴⁴³ These are described in the following examples:

- 2a. Universal relations (*sāmānya-lakṣaṇa*): Where the eyes are in contact with one pot, the direct cognition (*sākṣātkāra*) of the one pot occurs, and, on the basis of its pot-ness, the direct cognition of all pots also occurs via the eye. There are two views on this matter divided among the Navya Naiyāyikas and the traditional. According to the Navyas, the direct cognition of the pot in contact with the eyes as well as pots in other locations occurs in the same instant. But according to the older view, the direct cognition of just the pot in contact with the senses occurs in the first instant, and then, in the next instant, pots in other locations are directly cognized. Though these two direct cognitions are born of the eyes, their relations are different. Of these two opinions, the older is easier to understand, so that is discussed here: When the contact of the eyes occurs with the pot in front of oneself, the direct cognition of the pot occurs as “this is a pot.” The cause for this direct cognition is the relation of contact, *saṃyoga-sambandha*; therefore, this direct cognition is termed *saṃyoga-sambandha-janya*. In this cognition, the pot-ness qualifier (*viśeṣaṇa*), i.e., class (*prakāra*), resides in all pots. Due to this relation, in the next instant, the direct cognition, born of the eyes, of all pots occurs, and the pot in front of one’s eyes is also an object of this direct cognition. Thus, two cognitions arise regarding the pot in front of one’s eyes: in the first instant, it is an ordinary cognition, and in the next, an extraordinary one. In the first instant, although the pot-ness class resides in that cognition too, at the time of the ordinary cognition of the pot before one’s eyes, an extraordinary relation is not possible, which is why it is believed to occur in the instant following the ordinary cognition. This is termed the relation to the universal class (*sāmānya-lakṣaṇa sambandha*). *Sāmānya* means class (*jāti*), *lakṣaṇa* is inherent nature (*svarūpa*), so it is also the *jāti-svarūpa-sambandha* (*VP* 7.60, 293-5).
- 2b. The nature of *jñāna-lakṣaṇa-sambandha*, along with example(s): Where the sense is in contact with its appropriate object, and, at the time of sense-contact, the memory

⁴⁴³ *Jñāna-lakṣaṇa* and *Yoga-janya-dharma-lakṣaṇa* are a challenge to translate concisely. I will stay with the Sanskrit terms.

cognition of an object inappropriate for sense-cognition occurs, just one cognition occurs, of both the object in contact with the sense and the object of the recollection. The portion of the cognition which is due to sense-contact is ordinary cognition, and the portion due to recollection is extraordinary cognition. [The Naiyāyikas use the nature of this *jñāna-lakṣaṇa-sambandha* to explain the perception of fragrance in sandalwood that is located too far away to for its fragrance to be directly perceived, though it can be seen]. For example, where the eye is in contact with sandalwood, if the recollection of the fragrance property also occurs, then the eye-generated perception “the sandalwood is fragrant” arises. Here, the sandalwood qualified by sandalwood-ness is suitable for [perception by] the eyes, and although fragrance is a property of sandalwood and the eyes are also in a relation of inherence in the conjoined (*saṃyukta-samavāya-sambandha*), the fragrance is not suitable for perception by the eyes, but by the nose. Therefore, the direct cognition of the sandalwood’s fragrance cannot occur via the eyes. Only the instance of sandalwood that is in contact with the eyes and its sandalwood-ness by its relation of inherence in the conjoined [sandalwood] can be directly perceived by the eyes. Although it is known that the *saṃyukta-samavāya-sambandha* of the eye with the fragrance quality of the sandalwood is not productive (*akiñcitkara*) [of cognition of fragrance], still, when the eye-cognition is in contact with the sandalwood, the cognition “The sandalwood is fragrant” is known to one’s experience. Therefore, it is necessary to consider some relation that is the cause of the direct cognition by eye of the fragrance quality residing in the sandalwood. Since impressions arise from prior experience and give rise to subsequent recollections of objects similar to the experience, the experience, impressions, and recollection – all three have the same basis (*ādhāra*) and object. Thus, the direct cognition via the eye, “the sandalwood is fragrant,” has as its object all three – sandalwood, sandalwood-ness, and fragrance. The relation with sandalwood and sandalwood-ness is ordinary, but recollection and impression being other than ordinary relations, are extraordinary. At the time of the eyes being in contact with sandalwood, where the recollection of fragrance is via experience, then it is an extraordinary recollection-relation, and, where there is no experience of recollection, it is an extraordinary impression-relation. This extraordinary relation is termed *jñāna-*

lakṣaṇā-sambandha. The use of the term *jñāna*, cognition, relating to recollection (*smṛti*) is well known, and because impressions are derived from cognition alone, and they give rise to subsequent cognition, they too are termed *jñāna* (*VP* 7.60, 295-8).

- 2c. *Yoga-janya-dharma-lakṣaṇa*: In the case of a *yogī*, who possesses supernatural powers and directly cognizes objects distant from the senses in the manner of cognition via the senses, the senses possess such distinctive capacity through the practice of yoga. In this case, the property (*dharma*) produced by yoga itself is termed the sense-relation. But there are differences in opinion regarding this process: a) In Jagadīśa Bhaṭṭācārya's⁴⁴⁴ view, the sense by which the object is suitably perceived alone provides the direct cognition. A *yogī* has direct cognition of non-proximate objects and also of the future and past via the senses, while non-*yogīs* only have direct cognition of the present via the senses. But the *yogī* does not have direct cognition of an object by a sense which is not suitable for its perception, for example, color is cognized via the eyes alone, not by the tongue, etc. b) Many authors hold that the power of a *yogī* is extraordinary, and the properties (*dharma*) produced via yoga are also different, according to the superiority or inferiority of the [*yogī*'s] practice. By superior practice, some *yogīs* have such a *dharma* that all suitable and unsuitable objects are cognized by means of just one sense. [Thus, a superior *yogī* is able to "see" a person's past and future karma, and other ordinarily imperceptible objects]. But some, on account of their inferior practice, may only have the ability to cognize objects by the appropriate senses alone. Because all kinds of non-proximate objects are indeed cognized by *dharma* produced by yoga, *yoga-janya-dharma* too is deemed an extraordinary relation (*VP* 7.60, 298).

According to Nyāya, the appearance of silver-ness, which is present in another location, in the mother-of-pearl before one's eyes, is by means of an extraordinary relation. When the defective eyes come into contact with mother-of-pearl, the mother-of-pearl instance is suitable for perception by the eyes, but the silver instance, which is the basis of the silver-ness, is not proximate to the eyes. Although the non-proximate silver-ness is not suitable for

⁴⁴⁴ Jagadīśa Bhaṭṭācārya, also known as Jagadīśa Tarkālaṅkāra (ca. 1600 CE), wrote the *Jagadīśī* (a sub-commentary on Raghunātha's *Anumāna-dīdhiti*), *Māyukha* (a commentary on Gaṅgeśa's *Tattvacintāmaṇi*), *Sūkti* (a commentary on Praśastapāda's *Padārtha-dharma-saṅgraha*), a sub-commentary on Raghunātha's *Līlāvati-dīdhiti*, and several original texts on Navya-nyāya, such as the *Śabda-śakti-prakāśikā*, *Tarkāmṛta* (a brief manual on Navya-nyāya), and *Nyāyadarśa* (an independent short work) (Matilal 1977b, 111).

eye-perception, just as the fragrance portion of the sandalwood cognition is extraordinary, here also the silver-ness portion in the erroneous cognition “this is silver” is extraordinary. The difference is that in the cognition, “the sandalwood is fragrant,” the fragrance residing in the sandalwood itself appears in the sandalwood, whereas in the cognition, “this is silver,” the silver-ness, which does not reside in the “this” object, appears in it. Further, in the [visual] cognition “the sandalwood is fragrant,” the fragrance, which is typically unsuited for eye-perception, appears, and all the general qualifiers of sandalwood also appear. In contrast, in the cognition “this is silver,” the appearance (*bhāsa*) of silver-ness, though being unsuited for visual perception on account of it being non-proximate, is similar to the appearance of the fragrance, but the particular, mother-of-pearl-ness, of mother-of-pearl does not appear, unlike the sandalwood-ness particular of sandalwood. In this manner, the two cognitions are different, and these differences cause the real versus false nature of the two cognitions (*VP* 7.61, 298-300). This is Nīścaldās’s presentation of the Naiyāyika conception of extraordinary relations, which they use to explain the eye-perception of fragrance in sandalwood located at a distance, and also the erroneous sense-perception in mother-of-pearl of silver located elsewhere.

6.3.5.4 The Nyāya arguments against *anirvacanīya-khyāti*

Having presented the Nyāya position on *anyathā-khyāti*, Nīścaldās next presents the Naiyāyika arguments against the Advaita *anirvacanīya-khyāti*, the theory that the object of erroneous cognition is logically indeterminate (*anirvacanīya*). Firstly, there is economy (*lāghava*) [i.e., logical or methodological simplicity] in *anyathā-khyāti* since the *anyathā-khyāti* proponent has to only accept causality of the erroneous cognition in the defect, whereas the *anirvacanīya-khyāti* proponent has to accept the causality of both the *anirvacanīya* objects, silver, etc., and also their cognition. Further, the *anirvacanīya-khyāti* proponent cannot succeed (*nirvāha honā*) without *anyathā-khyāti*. Advaita accepts *anyathā-khyāti* in some places and *anirvacanīya-khyāti* in others, but it is more appropriate to accept *anyathā-khyāti* everywhere. If the proponent were to accept *anirvacanīya-khyāti* in all cases, then there would be opposition to his own [Advaita] texts [which accept *anyathā-khyāti* in certain cases], and yet the proponent cannot succeed with only *anirvacanīya-khyāti*, because where *anirvacanīya-khyāti* is not possible, there the Advaita texts present *anyathā-khyāti*

alone. For example, where non-negatable reality (*satyatva*) is apprehended in inert (*anātma*) objects, if it is said that the *anirvacanīya* arising of non-negatability (*abādhyatva*) occurs in inert objects, then this will be contradictory, similar to the statements such as “birth of the unborn,” and “destruction of the eternal.” Therefore, in this case, the apprehension of self-reality (*ātma-satyatā*) in *anātma*, non-self, can only be possible via *anyathā-khyāti*, and, in Advaita texts too, *anyathā-khyāti* alone has been accepted in such cases.

The Advaita texts [according to the Nyāya proponent] have also accepted *anyathā-khyāti* in the case of mediate erroneous cognition. Perceptual cognition (*pratyakṣa jñāna*) necessarily (*niyama-pūrvaka*) pertains to the present alone, because the immediate cognition (*pratyakṣa*) can only be the cognition of an object that is in relation with the cognizer. An [immediate] relation of the silver-ness of non-proximate silver with the cognizer is not possible because the existence of silver before one’s eyes is necessary for immediate cognition. But mediate cognition of that which is in the past as well as the future can occur; therefore, an [immediate] relation of the object of mediate cognition to the cognizer is not required, nor is it even possible. In cases where the true cognition of an object located in another time and place occurs via either inference or verbal testimony, i.e., when there is no connection of the cognizer with the objects located in various times and places, then, in the case of erroneous mediate cognition, how can the cognizer possibly have a relation with the object? Therefore, in the case of mediate erroneous cognition, *anirvacanīya-khyāti* is not possible by any means; only *anyathā-khyāti* is possible in the form of apprehension of objects in a location devoid of objects. Advaita only accepts *anirvacanīya-khyāti* in the cases where the superimposed object is non-proximate to the substratum. But in reality, where the superimposed object may be in relation with the substratum that is before one’s eyes, there too *anyathā-khyāti* alone occurs. When there might be a *vṛtti* pertaining to the substratum, if the cognizer can be in relation with the superimposed object even by *anyathā-khyāti*, then there is no use in accepting the arising of an *anirvacanīya* object. Therefore, there is no utility in accepting *anirvacanīya-khyāti*, and it lacks economy (*VP* 7.62, 300-1).

6.3.5.5 Nīscaldās's refutation of the Nyāya objections to *anirvacanīya-khyāti* from within the Nyāya framework

Nīscaldās refutes these objections at length⁴⁴⁵ by establishing the invalidity of *anyathā-khyāti* from within the Nyāya framework. He shows the untenability of extraordinary relations from the standpoint of experience. He shows that the cognition of fragrance in sandalwood in the case considered earlier is not direct, but instead, it is inferred. The perception of fragrance cannot even be considered as the direct cognition of the extraordinary relation to the fragrance as a universal property. Even if one were to accept fragrance as an extraordinary relation, Nīscaldās shows that the erroneous cognition of silver as a recollection in mother-of-pearl is still not possible within the Nyāya framework. The perception of silver is also shown to not be caused by an inference of a past impression of silver seen elsewhere. The silver erroneously cognized as an immediate extraordinary relation, assuming this were possible, is shown to be indistinguishable from real silver. The cognition of extraordinary relations is also shown to conflict with inference as a means of cognition. Considering inference as weaker than perception and stronger than extraordinary perception to avoid this defect is also shown to not be feasible. Thus Nīscaldās considers *anyathā-khyāti* to be utterly impossible. Let us now take a look at his detailed arguments.

First, Nīscaldās suggests that the extraordinary relations such as universal relations (*sāmānya-lakṣaṇa*), etc., which have been termed the cause of immediate cognition, are utterly improper and opposed to all experience. If one who has cognition of a single pot via the eyes is asked, “how many pots have you directly cognized by eye,” the cognizer will answer, “your question itself results from a lack of discrimination, because only one pot is in front of me.” Thus, the cognizer instead finds fault with the question. But according to the Naiyāyika view, since the apparatus for the perception of all pots is available, and there is the possibility of different ordinary/extraordinary relations, such fault-finding should not occur, and instead the viewer should simply answer, “I see one pot with my eyes via ordinary relation, and all pots via extraordinary relation.” But this claim of the direct cognition of even non-proximate pots should cause astonishment in the hearts of all. The direct cognition by universal relation (*sāmānya-lakṣaṇa*) asserted by the Naiyāyikas is opposed everywhere by

⁴⁴⁵ Compared to Padmapāda & Prakāśātman's refutation of *anyathā-khyāti* in the *Pañcapādikā* and *Vivaraṇa* respectively (Padmapādācārya et al. 1992, 89-92ff), Nīscaldās's treatment shares similar arguments but is more detailed.

all doctrines. Upon directly cognizing one pot, the recollection, etc., of other pots is possible due to similarity, but all pots are not experienced as an immediate cognition.

Similarly, in the cognition, “the sandalwood is fragrant,” it is untenable to hold that the fragrance property residing (*avagāhin*) in the sandalwood is directly cognized by the eyes via the *jñāna-lakṣaṇa* relation [a relation to the here and now of the features of a thing which was known previously at another place and time, (2b) in section 6.3.5.3, p. 193ff]. Because, if the person to whom the direct cognition of sandalwood is occurring is asked, “what is seen by you?” then, even if the viewer responds, “fragrant sandalwood is seen by me,” and is asked again by way of investigating, “In what manner did you cognize that the sandalwood is fragrant?” the viewer would offer the following response, “It is white sandalwood; therefore, it must certainly have fragrance. Red sandalwood does not have fragrance; only this kind of white sandalwood has fragrance.” Thus, the viewer’s answer indicates inference giving rise to the fragrance portion of the sandalwood cognition; he would never offer the response, “I have directly cognized fragrance by eye.” Thus, it is clear that the cognition of fragrance is not immediate and via the eyes; rather, the cognition of the sandalwood portion is immediate, but the fragrance portion is inferred alone. Further, if the person viewing the sandalwood is asked, “Does this sandalwood have much fragrance or little?” he might offer the following response. “By the eye, it is apprehended as white sandalwood alone, by which the inference of the fragrance-universal occurs. When the fragrance is immediately cognized, then it can be known whether the fragrance is excessive or less. Only when it is smelled by the nose, can the cognition of the excess (*utkarṣa*) or dearth (*apakarṣa*) of fragrance be known. Visually, only the cognition of white sandalwood occurs and from it the fragrance universal alone is inferred.” By this kind of answer too, only the inferred cognition of the fragrance-universal is established, and not direct cognition, since it is the rule that by whichever sense sound, touch, color, taste and fragrance is cognized, by that sense alone is the excess or dearth of the sound, etc., cognized. If fragrance were cognized by the eyes, then the eyes should also cognize the excess or dearth of fragrance. The non-apprehension of the excess or dearth of any object via inference is well known through experience; for example, where fire is inferred via smoke, the largeness or smallness of the fire is not known (*VP* 7.63, 302-3).

If the Naiyāyikas say, “the excess or dearth of objects appears through direct cognition by means of ordinary relations; only the universal property of the object appears by means of an

extraordinary relation, not the particular,” this too is improper, because the appearance (*prakāśa*) of a universal property of an object can be possible even by way of mediate cognition, and thus, it is futile to conceive of an uncommon (*aprasiddha*) direct cognition via an uncommon extraordinary relation. If the Naiyāyikas say, “By extraordinary relation, fragrance is illumined only as a universal, not as a particular,” then again it will be established that, as soon as the white sandalwood is directly cognized by eye, only the universal cognition of fragrance takes place as an inference, and the cause (*prayojaka*) of that inference is the eye as the means of the cognition of sandalwood’s whiteness. Thus, the cognition of fragrance is not produced by the eyes, but instead is an inference.

The Naiyāyikas may respond as follows. “Although the eye-cognition of fragrance does not reveal its excess or dearth and is therefore similar to inference, yet it is not possible for that cognition to be similar to inference because the cognition, “the sandalwood is fragrant,” is one cognition and not two. If one cognition were to be termed “direct” in the sandalwood portion and “inference” in the fragrance portion, then there would be the concurrence of two opposing properties (*dharma*) in one cognition. Therefore, both portions should be considered immediate cognition.” This too is improper. Just as, in the Naiyāyika view, two opposing properties, in the form of ordinary and extraordinary cognition, are concurrent, in the Advaita view also, the immediate cognition and inference can be concurrent in one cognition. Further, the opposition of immediate cognition and inference is only perceived by followers of the Nyāya Śāstra.⁴⁴⁶ In contrast, ordinariness and extraordinariness are mutually contradictory, like presence and absence; therefore, their opposition is known to all. Since it is well known that “the absentee (*pratiyogin*) and absence (*abhāva*) mutually oppose each other,” and the concurrence of such well-known opposing properties is accepted by the Naiyāyikas themselves, it is astonishing for them to say [in objection] that “there will be concurrence of opposing objects, perceptibility and inferability.” In the Vedānta view, cognition, in the form of the *antaḥ-karaṇa*’s *vṛtti*, is a substance (*dravya*) and being composed of parts, the concurrence of two properties in separate parts is possible. Since the *antaḥ-karaṇa*, which is the material cause of the cognition, has parts (*sāmśa*), two cognitions occur as transformations of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* in the cognition “the sandalwood is fragrant,”

⁴⁴⁶ Lit. “those who have impressions, *saṃskāras*, of the Nyāya Śāstra, *nyāya-śāstra ke saṃskāra-vāle kūṃ*” (VP 7.63, 304).

the portion “the sandalwood” is immediate (*pratyakṣa*), while the cognition “is fragrant” is an inference (*anumiti*). Both transformations occur in the same instant; therefore, duality never appears in them. But in the Nyāya view, cognition is considered an action, not a substance, therefore, it is without parts (*nirāṁśa*), and therefore, in that part-less cognition the concurrence of two opposing properties, ordinariness and extraordinariness is negated. As the Naiyāyikas themselves agree, the fragrance portion of the cognition can never be via the eyes. (*VP* 7.63, 303-4).

Even if one somehow accepted the Naiyāyika view, that the cognition, “the sandalwood is fragrant” is produced by an extraordinary relation, erroneous cognitions such as “this is silver,” etc., are never possible according to the Nyāya explanation. Those who hold the cause of this cognition to be contact of the eyes with mother-of-pearl and recollection of silver-ness must be asked these questions. “After contact of the eyes with mother-of-pearl, after the general cognition of mother-of-pearl as ‘this’ qualified by the brightness which is the common quality of mother-of-pearl and silver, does the recollection of silver occur and then the erroneous cognition of silver (1)? Or before the general cognition of mother-of-pearl itself, when the eyes contact the mother-of-pearl, does the recollection of silver qualified by silver-ness and the erroneous cognition ‘this is silver’ occur in that same instant (2)?” Cognition per (1) is not possible, because the sequence of three cognitions – first the general cognition of mother-of-pearl, then the recollection of silver qualified by silver-ness, and then the erroneous cognition of silver – is negated by experience, where everyone has just one cognition, “this is silver.” Cognition per (2) also is not possible, because all cognitions are self-illuminated (*sva-prakāśa*) consciousness by nature, and cognitions as *vr̥tti* are revealed by the witness-consciousness (*sākṣī-bhāṣya*). Therefore, no cognition is unknown at any time; this will be explained further on.⁴⁴⁷ Thus, at the very instant of the eyes’ contact with mother-of-pearl, and right before the general cognition of mother-of-pearl, if the recollection of silver should occur, then it should be revealed, since the consciousness portion in the recollection is self-revealing and, since the *vr̥tti* portion relying on the witness-consciousness is always revealed, that recollection should be experienced. If the Naiyāyika is asked under oath, “Have you experienced the recollection of silver prior to the erroneous cognition in

⁴⁴⁷ In *VP* 7.76, 335 (section 7.1.1 on the Nyāya theory of extrinsic validity, *parataḥ prāmāṇya*) and further in *VP* 8.76, 393-4 in connection with *dṛṣṭi-sṛṣṭi-vāda* (section 8.3.1).

mother-of-pearl, ‘This is silver?’,” and, if the Naiyāyika is truthful, he will have to attest to the absence of the experience of recollection. Thus, prior to the erroneous cognition, in the very instant of contact between the eyes and mother-of-pearl, the recollection of silver does not occur.

The Naiyāyika may respond, “The above defect does not apply, because, although the erroneous cognition of silver occurs due to contact with the eyes along with the impressions pertaining to silver, which are created by experience of silver, the impression-qualities are not suitable for perception but are inferable.” In that case, the question arises as to whether the erroneous cognition is created by the arisen or the unarisen impressions. If it is answered that the unarisen impressions are the creator of the erroneous cognition, this is not possible, because recollection, etc., never occurs from unarisen impressions. If a recollection were to occur from unarisen impressions, then the recollection should always persist. Therefore, one has to accept recollection and erroneous cognition from arisen impressions only. But this also is not possible in reality, because only the sight of similar objects, etc., are the arousers of impressions. Therefore, upon the contact of the eyes with mother-of-pearl, the impressions pertaining to silver arise only after the cognition of the mother-of-pearl qualified by shininess; the arising of the silver-impressions in the same instant as the contact of the eyes with mother-of-pearl is not possible. Therefore, the Naiyāyika will have to concede that in the first instant, the eyes contact mother-of-pearl; in the second, the cognition of mother-of-pearl qualified by shininess takes place; in the third, the impressions arise; and in the fourth instant, the erroneous cognition of silver occurs. But this is negated by experience, since, in the very next instant after eye-contact, everyone experiences erroneous cognition via the eye. Further, according to the Nyāya process, two cognitions of mother-of-pearl are established: one is the general cognition that gives rise to the impressions, and the other is the erroneous cognition caused by the impressions. But two such cognitions also are counter to experience since the erroneous cognition, “this is silver,” occurs immediately when the eyes come into contact with mother-of-pearl. Therefore, the Naiyāyika statement, “the erroneous cognition ‘this is silver’ arises from mother-of-pearl conjoined with the eyes, accompanied by impressions born of the experience of silver,” is not possible (*VP* 7.63, 304-6).

[The Naiyāyikas use the nature of *jñāna-lakṣaṇa-sambandha*, discussed in section 6.3.5.3, under (2b), p. 193ff., to explain the perception of fragrance in sandalwood that is

located too far away to for its fragrance to be directly perceived, though it can be seen. Nīścaldās now considers this view for refutation]. Even if the cognition “the sandalwood is fragrant” is somehow accepted as immediate extraordinary cognition, still, the cognition “this is silver” arising from a *jñāna-lakṣaṇa* extraordinary relation is never possible. Since the doubt about the excess or dearth of fragrance still remains even after the cognition “the sandalwood is fragrant,” it has to be accepted that the definite manifestation (*prākāṭya*) of excess or dearth of fragrance does not occur via the extraordinary relation. If the manifestation of an object were to occur even by an extraordinary relation, then there would be no doubt regarding the excess or dearth of fragrance. In the erroneous cognition, “this is silver,” and the valid cognition from real silver, “this is silver,” the manifestation of silver is identical because, if there were no manifestation of silver in the case of erroneous cognition, then there should be doubt regarding the size, etc., of silver, but, in fact, no such doubt occurs. From this it is clear that the manifestation of silver in erroneous cognition is the same as that in the cognition of real silver itself. But in a cognition caused by a *jñāna-lakṣaṇa* relation, the manifestation of the object does not occur; therefore, the cause of the erroneous cognition, “this is silver” cannot be a *jñāna-lakṣaṇa* relation. If it is considered thoughtfully, a *jñāna-lakṣaṇa* relation is never possible because the essence of the Naiyāyika position, “extraordinary immediate cognition occurs by *jñāna-lakṣaṇa* relation,” is that where one object has recollections or impressions produced by experience, and there occurs contact of the sense with another object, the object connected to the recollection or impressions is apprehended precisely there, in the object connected with the sense. In other words, the object conjoined with the sense is apprehended as a qualificand (*viśeṣya*) and the object connected with the recollection or impressions is apprehended as a qualifier (*viśeṣaṇa*). For example, in the cognition, “the sandalwood is fragrant,” the sandalwood connected with the eyes is the qualificand, and the fragrance connected with the recollection or impressions is the qualifier. Similarly, in the erroneous cognition “this is silver,” the mother-of-pearl connected with the eyes is the qualificand and the silver-ness connected with the recollection or impressions is the qualifier, and so the cognition of both qualifier and qualificand is immediate. If this Naiyāyika position is accepted, then the status of inference as a means of cognition is undermined, because the inferential cognition, “the mountain is fire-possessing,” can only occur through inference as the means of the means of cognition. In this case, the

recollection or the arisen impressions of the pervasion (*vyāpti*) of the probandum (*sādhya*) in the probans (*hetu*), which is smoke, gives rise to inferential cognition. This has already been described in the section on inference (*VP* 2.1, section 5.4.2). When the recollection of the pervasion of the probandum occurs, the pervader or probandum is also recalled. In the Nyāya manner, when the immediate cognition, “the mountain is smoke- possessing,” occurs from the contact of the eyes with the smoke on the mountain and the recollection of the fire, then the acceptance of the inference as a means of cognition, the cause of inferential cognition of the certainty of the probandum, will be useless. But the *sūtras* of the all-knowing sages, Gotama, Kaṇāda, Kapila, etc.,⁴⁴⁸ all mention a separate inference *pramāṇa*, which they would have omitted if there were no need for it. Therefore, *jñāna-lakṣaṇa* relation-caused extraordinary direct cognition is wrong (*alīka*) (*VP* 7.63, 306-7).

The proponent of *anyathā-khyāti* might offer the following response: “Because the object-ness (*viśayatā*) of perceptual cognition is different from that of inferential cognition, there is no doubt regarding the size, etc., of the object of perception, but these doubts definitely persist regarding the object of inference. The difference [in the cognition] of the object as mediate or immediate can only occur by the difference of whether it is perceptually or inferentially cognized. Therefore, the producer of mediate-ness (*parokṣatā*) of the object cannot be perceptual cognition, but inferential cognition alone, and its cause is the means of cognition, inference.” This too is not possible because, although the Naiyāyikas consider the object-ness of ordinary perception (*pratyakṣa*) to be different from inference, in cognitions like “the sandalwood is fragrant,” where they allow extraordinary perception in the fragrance portion, the cognition of fragrance [in the extraordinary perception case] is similar to inference. Because just as excess or dearth remain undetermined in the object of inferential cognition, the excess, etc., of fragrance remain undetermined as well; therefore, there remains no difference whatsoever between the object-ness of extraordinary perception and that of inference. Where the object-ness of erroneous extraordinary perception is accepted in silver, etc., the difference of that object-ness from the object-ness of inference is known by experience, and so the doubt regarding the silver’s extent, etc., does not occur. However, there is no difference between the object-ness of extraordinary valid perception born of a

⁴⁴⁸ Akṣapāda Gotama is considered the author of the *Nyāya-sūtra*, Kaṇāda, of the *Vaiśeṣika-sūtra*, and Kapila, of the *Sāṅkhya-sūtra*.

jñāna-lakṣaṇa relation and that of inference. Just as there is non-manifestation (*aprākāṭya*) in the object of inference, similarly there is non-manifestation even in the case of objects of extraordinary valid perception, fragrance, etc. Therefore, if the valid perceptual cognition of fire on the mountain is possible by means of extraordinary perception via a *jñāna-lakṣaṇa* relation, inference as a means of cognition (*anumāna pramāṇa*) will be superfluous. But because inference as a means of cognition is established on the basis of the words of those who are all-knowing, that which causes the futility of inference as a means of cognition, namely, the extraordinary perception itself, is not established (*aprasiddha*) (VP 7.63, 306-8).

Moreover, whenever inference occurs via its means of cognition, in all such cases the apparatus for extraordinary perception is also present. Just as, prior to the inference of fire on the mountain, the cognition of pervasion (*vyāpti*) in the form of smoke is the means (*sāmagrī*) of inference, similarly the contact of the eyes with smoke and the recollection of fire are the means of extraordinary perception. The means of perception and inference both being present, the perceptual cognition of fire on the mountain ought to occur, not an inference, rendering inference futile. According to Nyāya Śāstra, where the means for the inference pertaining to one object and for the perception of another object are concurrent, the means of inference will win out; but where the means of perception and inference pertain to the same object, the means of perception win out. For example, when the eyes connect with smoke on the mountain, although both the means for perception of smoke and the inference of fire are concurrent, in this case, only the inference of fire occurs, and the perception of smoke is absorbed into the inference of fire itself. But where there is contact of the eyes with both smoke and fire, and there is also cognition of the pervasion of smoke by fire, in that case, only perception of fire occurs, and not its inference. Similarly, in the case under discussion, [namely, the instance prior to fire being inferred from smoke], despite the means of inference being present, the fire should be only perceptually cognized by the extraordinary means of perception as *jñāna-lakṣaṇa* relation, and, if this is accepted, then there would be no need for inference as a means of cognition.

The Naiyāyikas might respond as follows. “As considered above, although where there are different objects, the means of inference are stronger than those of perception, and where the object is the same, the means of perception is stronger. Even so, only the means of ordinary perception have been accepted as being stronger, and not those of extraordinary

perception. The means of extraordinary perception are always weaker than the means of inference. So inference as a means of cognition does not become useless (*niṣphala*) in the case of the fire on the mountain because the means of inference overrides (*bādha*) the means of extraordinary perception.” This too is improper, because where there is a doubt regarding a post, “is this a post or not?” and then the erroneous cognition, “this is something with hands, etc., which are invariable concomitants (*vyāpya*) of human-ness,” followed by erroneous perception, “this is indeed a human,” in this case, according to the Naiyāyika process, only the inference of a human should occur, not perception. The perception of human-ness in a post creates an erroneous perception, and, according to the Nyāya view, the means of erroneous cognition are extraordinary, and, are weaker than the means of inference. Thus, the erroneous cognition of human-ness in a post should be an inference, and not perception. If the erroneous cognition were accepted as inference, then in the next instant, the after-cognition (*anuvyavasāya*), “I see a human with my own eyes (*sākṣāt*)” should not follow, but instead it ought to be, “I infer a human.” Therefore, it should be accepted that, as in the case of ordinary perception, for extraordinary perception also, when perception and inference have the same object, the means of extraordinary perception are stronger, and the means of inference are weaker. Therefore, if the arising of perception via *jñāna-lakṣaṇa* relation is accepted, then inference will be negated; only the perceptual cognition of fire, etc., will occur on the mountains, etc., and inference as a means of cognition will remain useless. If inference as a means of cognition is accepted, then the direct cognition (*pratyakṣa-jñāna*) of a non-proximate object via sense-contact accompanied by recollection or impressions will not be possible. Thus, the apprehension of mother-of-pearl as silver-ness via *anyathā-khyāti* is utterly impossible (*VP* 7.63, 308-10).

6.3.5.6 Nīscaldās’s defense of *anirvacanīya-khyāti*

Having established the invalidity of *anyathā-khyāti* from within the Nyāya framework, Nīscaldās concludes his treatment of *anyathā-khyāti* by taking up the defense of *anirvacanīya-khyāti* against the flaws enumerated earlier, namely: 1) in *anirvacanīya-khyāti*, the causality of both the object and cognition have been accepted in the defect, but *anyathā-khyāti* accepts the causality of cognition alone in defect only and not of the object; and 2)

anirvacanīya-khyāti has to accept *anyathā-khyāti* as well, but *anyathā-khyāti* has no need to accept *anirvacanīya-khyāti*, and so *anyathā-khyāti* has economy over *anirvacanīya-khyāti*.

Nīscaldās holds that even the *anyathā-khyāti* proponent should certainly accept *anirvacanīya-khyāti* in dreams, according to scripture (*śruti-smṛti*).⁴⁴⁹ For an orthodox person (*āstika*), it is not appropriate to distort (lit. *anyathā bhāva-kalpana*, to conceive as otherwise) the meaning stated in the Vedas (*vedokta artha*) by means of the tools of logic (*yukti-samudāya*) invented by the human mind (*puruṣa-mati-kalpita*). Moreover, the identity (*tādātmya*) of silver alone is apprehended in mother-of-pearl, i.e., the Naiyāyikas should accept the fact that, just as the inherence (*samavāya*) of silver-ness is apprehended in “this” object, similarly, “this” object and the identity of silver are apprehended. Here, “this” object is mother-of-pearl, and the identity of mother-of-pearl and silver is not known anywhere other than in erroneous cognition. Thus, it is proper to accept that the identity of mother-of-pearl and silver arises in an *anirvacanīya* manner only in a location before one’s eyes. Immediate apprehension (*aparokṣa pratīti*) of something unknown does not tend to occur, but the identity of mother-of-pearl and silver is apprehended immediately; therefore, one has to resoundingly (*balātkāra se*) accept the arising of *anirvacanīya* identity.

If the Naiyāyikas should stubbornly insist that “the inherence of silver-ness appears in mother-of-pearl” means that silver-ness appears in mother-of-pearl by an inherence relation, and not that the identity (*tādātmya*) of silver appears in mother-of-pearl, then, in the instant after the cognition of mother-of-pearl, the negation (*bādha*), “this is not silver,” should not occur. But everyone experiences such negation as true (*anubhava-siddha*), and the object of this negation is the identity of silver alone in mother-of-pearl, not the inherence of silver-ness. If, at the time of erroneous cognition, the identity of silver were not to appear in mother-of-pearl, then this negation would be object-less. Or, if only the inherence of silver-ness should appear in mother-of-pearl and not the identity of silver, then the negation, “there is no silver-ness here,” should occur. But this does not occur, and so one must accept the fact that, at the time and place of erroneous cognition, the identity of silver alone appears in mother-of-pearl, and not the inherence of silver-ness. Therefore, even in *anyathā-khyāti*, it is

⁴⁴⁹ Nīscaldās is referring to his preliminary arguments against *anyathā-khyāti* in section 6.3.5.2, on page 189, where he cites BU 4.3.10 and BS 3.2.1 in support of *anirvacanīya-khyāti*.

necessary to accept the arising of the stated *anirvacanīya* identity because one cannot succeed (*nirvāha honā*) with *anyathā-khyāti* alone (*VP* 7.64, 310-11).

The Naiyāyika's assertion, "*anirvacanīya-khyāti* has to accept *anyathā-khyāti* too, and even Advaita authors have accepted *anyathā-khyāti*" (2), was made without knowing the intent of the Advaita texts. In Advaita, *anyathā-khyāti* is not accepted anywhere at all, whereas *anirvacanīya-khyāti* alone is accepted everywhere. In reality, wherever valid cognition is discussed in the Advaita doctrine (*siddhānta*), the object and its cognition are referred to as *anirvacanīya*. In the few places where *anyathā-khyāti* is discussed, the intent is only that *anyathā-khyāti* is possible where there is contact between the substratum and the superimposed or where mediate erroneous cognition occurs, but *anyathā-khyāti* is not possible everywhere. However, *anirvacanīya-khyāti* is incontrovertible where the superimposed object is non-proximate and there is immediate erroneous cognition, and therefore, it is necessary to accept *anirvacanīya-khyāti* alone in all cases. Thus, Advaita mentions *anyathā-khyāti* with the sole intent of referring to its possibility, and not to indicate its acceptance. In Advaita, even where the *anyathā-khyāti* of the existence of *ātma* (*ātma-sattā*) in non-*ātma* is mentioned, there, too, an *anirvacanīya* relation of *ātma-sattā* arises in *anātmā*. Wherever the *anirvacanīya* arising of the relatum (*sambandhin*) is not possible, there an *anirvacanīya* relation is accepted. Thus, the *Brahma-vidyābharaṇa* refers to the arising of an *anirvacanīya* subject even in cases of mediate erroneous cognition.⁴⁵⁰ But even if *anyathā-khyāti* is accepted as a simplification (*sarala-buddhi se*) by Advaita in cases where mediate erroneous cognition might occur, it is no defect (*VP* 7.64, 311-12).

The *anyathā-khyāti* proponent also raised the defect of lack of economy. "Where [both] the cause of *anirvacanīya* silver, etc., and their cognition is considered a defect, if, instead, only the cognition is considered to be caused by defect, then there is economy. In *anyathā-khyāti*, the silver from the other location is well known; therefore, only the cognition of its silver-ness property occurs in mother-of-pearl, there is no actual silver there. Thus, only the cognition is caused by defect, and so there is economy in *anyathā-khyāti*." This too is improper because, if, through an appeal to [logical] economy, even the experientially established (*anubhava-siddha*) object were to be omitted, and even the object of true

⁴⁵⁰ A sub-commentary on the *BS ŚBh*, by Advaitānandabodhendra, 1700 CE (Advaitānanda[bodhendra] 1894/5, 16-39), e.g., "*na kutrāpy anyathā-khyātiḥ*" (23).

cognition were to be refused, then an even greater degree of economy would be achieved if consciousness (*viññāna*) alone is accepted, along the lines of Yogācāra (*viññāna-vāda*). Therefore, just as experientially established objects such as pots, etc., are apprehended and the extremely economical *viññāna-vāda* is abandoned, similarly *anyathā-khyāti* also should be abandoned. If it is examined thoughtfully, even *anyathā-khyāti* has lack of economy in the following ways. 1) In the immediate cognition (*sākṣātkāra*) of silver, the causality of contact between eyes and silver is ascertained (*nirṇīta*). If the cognition of silver located in another place is accepted in mother-of-pearl, then that ascertainment is abandoned. 2) The immediate cognition of silver is ascertained by contact between eyes and silver, but in *anyathā-khyāti* the erroneous immediate cognition of silver occurs by contact between eyes and mother-of-pearl, i.e., the unascertained is accepted. 3) The *jñāna-lakṣaṇa* relation is not established (*aprasiddha*); therefore, in the *anyathā-khyāti* view, the uncommon is accepted. Even if the *jñāna-lakṣaṇa* relation is accepted, manifestation (*prakaṭatā*) of an object whose perception is accepted via extraordinary relation does not occur at all. Therefore, in the cognition, “the sandalwood is fragrant,” despite the extraordinary perception of fragrance having occurred, the after-cognition (*anuvyavasāya*), “I immediately perceive fragrance,” never occurs. But upon the erroneous cognition of silver caused by extraordinary relation, the silver is manifested, and that is why, in the instant following the erroneous cognition, the after-cognition occurs: “I immediately perceive silver.” In this manner, when a true (*yathārtha*) cognition caused by *jñāna-lakṣaṇa* relation does not have the ability to effect manifestation (*prakaṭya-janakatā*) [of its object, fragrance, in the above example], then to accept such ability in the case of erroneous cognition alone is astonishing, and it becomes an uncommon conception (*aprasiddha kalpanā*). In this manner, *anyathā-khyāti* itself, having several uncommon conceptions, is lacking in economy. But according to scripture (*śruti-smṛti*), the defect-caused *anirvacanīya* objects and their ability to effect cognition is well known and not an unestablished conception (*VP* 7.64, 312-14).⁴⁵¹

⁴⁵¹ Nīścaldās mentions that *anyathā-khyāti* has been thoroughly (*viśeṣa-rūpa se*) refuted in the *Anirvacanīya-vāda* by Brahmānanda, but it is a challenging text, therefore, he has presented the rejection of *anyathā-khyāti* here in the easily understood manner of *Brahma-vidyābharāṇa* (*VP* 7.64, 314). No reliable information is to be found linking the text *Anirvacanīya-vāda* and Brahmānanda. *Anirvacanīya-vāda* may possibly be the anonymous incomplete work *Anirvacanīya-khyāti-siddhiḥ* mentioned by Thangaswami (1980, 161, #67).

With this strenuous defense of *anirvacanīya-khyāti* against the Nyāya objections, culminating in a resounding refutation of *anyathā-khyāti* both on scriptural and logical grounds, Nīścaldās concludes his treatment of the Nyāya theory of erroneous cognition, and next directs his attention to the Mīmāṃsā theory.

6.3.6 *Akhyāti-vāda*, The Theory that the Erroneous Cognition is the Failure to Distinguish between the Real Recollection and Real Substratum

Advaita Vedānta is also known as *uttara-mīmāṃsā*, “enquiry (*mīmāṃsā*) in to the latter (*uttara*) section of the Vedas,” as contrasted with [*pūrva*]-*mīmāṃsā*, the school concerned with Vedic exegesis pertaining to the earlier (*pūrva*) sections of the Veda, which deal primarily with Vedic rituals and their efficacy. Prābhākara Mīmāṃsā is one of the primary schools of [Pūrva] Mīmāṃsā interpretation, named after Prabhākara Miśra (600-700 CE); it does not accept liberation. (The other major [Pūrva] Mīmāṃsā school is founded by Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, 600-700 CE, and does allow for liberation).⁴⁵² The Prābhākara *akhyāti* theory of erroneous cognition has historically served as the *prima-facie* view (*pūrva-pakṣa*) for Nyāya’s *anyathā-khyāti*,⁴⁵³ and also in Vedānta expositions of *anirvacanīya-khyāti*.⁴⁵⁴ Therefore, Nīścaldās, too, treats the Prābhākara theory at considerable length.

6.3.6.1 The Prābhākara statement of *akhyāti-vāda*

The essence of the *akhyāti* theory of Prābhākara Mīmāṃsā, according to Nīścaldās, is as follows. Other scriptures (*śāstra*) have accepted cognition as being of two kinds, true (*yathārtha*) and untrue (*ayathārtha*), leading to activity (*pravṛtti*) and refraining from activity (*nivṛtti*) respectively. The Prābhākara view considers this improper because untrue cognitions are unestablished (*aprasiddha*), all cognitions are true alone. Even if false cognitions were to occur, as soon as the person had the cognition, upon seeing the cognition-ness (*jñānatva*) general property, the doubt of falsity (*ayathārthatva*) would arise with regard to the cognition, and there would be the absence of activity or refraining from activity towards the cognized object (*pravṛtti-nivṛtti*). [The words *pravṛtti* and *nivṛtti* have a broad range of meanings. *Pravṛtti* can mean inclination, activity, effort towards some end, active

⁴⁵² For the relation between *pūrva*- and *uttara-mīmāṃsā*, see (Bronkhorst 2007).

⁴⁵³ As in Jayanta Bhaṭṭa’s (seventh c. CE) *Nyāya-mañjarī* (EIP 2:368-70), and Aparārkadeva or Aparādityadeva’s (twelfth c.) *Nyāya-muktāvalī* (EIP 2:605-6), to name a few.

⁴⁵⁴ For example, in Padmapāda’s *Pañcapādikā* (Padmapādācārya 1948, 19-27).

involvement with the world. *Nivṛtti* can mean negation, cessation, involution, turning away from action, withdrawal. In the present context, *pravṛtti* shall be translated as “activity (towards the cognized object)” and *nivṛtti* as “refraining from activity (towards the cognized object).” I shall provide the terms with their translation when there are is the potential for polysemy].

In the Prābhākara view, only the certainty of truth and the absence of the doubt of falsity with regard to the cognition act as causes of a person’s activity or refraining from activity, and as long as there remains the doubt that the cognition is false, neither activity nor refraining from activity will be possible. When all cognitions are true, then how should there be the doubt of falsity in cognition? Thus, erroneous cognition is not known. When a person acts towards (*pravṛtti*) mother-of-pearl due to greed, and moves away from (*nivṛtti*) the rope due to fear, neither action is due to a direct cognition of silver or snake. If such actions were to occur, then these cognitions [of silver or snake] could not possibly be true cognition, but false cognition is not accepted (*alīka*). Therefore, there is only the recollection of silver and snake, not direct cognition, and the general cognition of mother-of-pearl and rope is directly perceived. Since there is a connection (*sambandha*) of mother-of-pearl and rope with defective eyes, their particular form does not appear, only their general “this-ness.” Thus, in the instant following the general cognition, on account of similarity, the impressions (*saṃskāra*) of silver and snake are evoked (*udbuddha*) and these cause the recollection of silver and snake. Although the that-ness (*tattā*) of an object also appears in all recollections, when the impressions are evoked by a connection with defective eyes, on account of the power of the defect, the that-ness portion gets suppressed (*pramoṣa*, lit. stolen). In the case of “this is silver,” “this is a snake,” two cognitions occur; the direct cognition in the form of the general cognition of the mother-of-pearl and rope as “this” is true, and the recollection of silver and snake is also true. Although the direct cognition has omitted (*tyāgikai*) the particular portion of the mother-of-pearl/rope and the recollection too has omitted the that-ness portion, even so, a cognition does not become false by omitting one portion. Rather, the cognition of an object by another form alone is called false cognition. Therefore, the above cognition is not false, it is true. In this manner, erroneous cognition is not known in *akhyāti*, according to Prābhākara Mīmāṃsā (*VP* 7.65, 314-5).

6.3.6.2 The Prābhākara defense of *akhyāti*

An objection can be raised against the *akhyāti* standpoint. “The convention (*niyama*) is that there is activity towards that object in which the cognition of the means of obtaining that which is desired (*iṣṭa-sāadhanatā-jñāna*) resides, and there is the refraining from activity towards that object in which cognition of the means of obtaining that which is not desired (*aniṣṭa-sāadhanatā-jñāna*) resides. Now, if according to *akhyāti*, the cognition of the means of obtaining that which is desired is accepted to reside in mother-of-pearl, then erroneous cognition will be accepted, and if it is said that the above cognition is absent, the activity of the person desirous of silver should not occur, but in fact it does. Similarly, in the rope, there is no property of being a means of obtaining that which is undesired (*aniṣṭa-sāadhanatva*), but if such a cognition should be accepted in the rope, then erroneous cognition will be accepted; if it is said that such a cognition is absent, then refraining from activity [towards the rope], in the form of flight from it, ought not to occur, but in fact it does. Therefore, erroneous cognition is unavoidable” (*VP* 7.66, 315-6).

This objection is refuted by the *akhyāti* proponent in the following way. When a person acts (*pravṛtti*) towards a cognized object, the following collocation (*sāmagrī*) is the cause of *pravṛtti*: 1) the general cognition; 2) the recollection of the desired object; 3) the absence of cognition of the difference (*bheda-jñānābhāva*) of the object of recollection from the object in front of one; and 4) the absence of the cognition of difference of the recollection from cognition before one’s eyes. Thus, even without erroneous cognition, activity is possible. Now, if only the absence of cognition of the difference between the object and cognition is called the cause of activity, then activity should occur even in a neutral state (*udāsīna daśā*). Therefore, the direct general cognition of the object (1) and the recollection of that which is desired (*iṣṭa-smṛti*) (2) are also stated as the cause of activity. If just the direct general cognition of the object and the recollection of that which is desired (1 and 2) are stated as the cause of activity, then, with the cognition of mother-of-pearl as something and the recollection of silver that is connected to another location, only the cognition, “that silver is in another location, this is something” should occur, and even in this case, the activity of a person desirous of silver should occur. Therefore, the absence of cognition of the lack of difference of the desired object and its cognition on one hand, and the object before oneself and its cognition on the other (3 and 4) have also been stated as the cause of activity. In the

case of the cognition, “that silver is in another location, this is something,” because there is cognition of difference between silver and mother-of-pearl, activity does not occur. If only the absence of the cognition of difference of the desired object from the object before oneself (3) were added to the means of activity, and the absence of the cognition of difference between the two cognitions (4) were not included, then, on apprehending two cognitions (1 and 2) as “this is silver,” i.e., I saw the this-object, and I have recalled silver, even after apprehending the difference between the two, activity should occur, but it does not.

Therefore, the absence of the cognition of difference [of the recollection itself from the present cognition] (4) has also been included in the means for activity. In this manner, along with both kinds of absence of cognition of difference (3 and 4), and the recollection of the desired (2), the direct perceptual general cognition of the object in front of one (1) is the cause of activity. Where there is cognition of difference of silver from mother-of-pearl (3), there too, the activity of the person desirous of silver does not occur. Where the difference between the cognition of mother-of-pearl and the cognition of silver is apprehended (4), there too activity does not occur. Therefore, cognition of difference is the obstructor (*pratibandhaka*) of activity, and the absence of obstruction in the form of absence of cognition of difference is the cause of activity. Therefore, considering the causality of activity to reside in the absence of cognition of difference does not incur the defect of conception of the unestablished (*aprasiddha kī kalpanā*).

Where fleeing occurs on account of fear in the vicinity of a rope, there, too, there is no erroneous cognition of a snake. Instead, the general cognition of the rope (1), recollection of the snake connected with dislike (2, 5), and the absence of the cognition of differences of the two objects and their recollection (3, 4), all are the cause of fleeing. Fleeing too is a particular activity, which never occurs towards the object, but only away from it. The difference is only that in activity directed away, the recollection is connected with aversion, and in the activity directed towards, recollection occurs in conjunction with desire. Whether the action of fleeing born of fear is called activity or refraining from activity, its cause is the recollection of an object connected with fear alone. In the case where the refraining from activity occurs in the form of the absence of the activity of the person desirous of silver, caused by the cognition of mother-of-pearl, since the cause is the cognition of mother-of-pearl alone, it is not an erroneous cognition. Where the activity of a person who is desirous of silver occurs

towards real silver, its cause is the cognition of silver qualified by silver-ness; therefore, in the case of silver in front of oneself, the cause of activity is not the absence of cognition of difference. Therefore, in no way does the loss (*lopa*) of causation (*janakatā*) of activity occur with regard to the cognition of the qualificand (*viśiṣṭa*), since, in the case of real silver too, it is not possible to state that the absence of the cognition of difference of silver with regards to the silver right in front of oneself alone is the cause of activity (*VP* 7.66, 316-7).

The gist of this is that if the absentee (*pratiyogin*) is known, then its absence pertains to empirical utility (*vyavahāra-gocara*), but an unknown absentee's absence is not suitable for any empirical utility. For example, the absentee of the absence of a hare's horn [namely, the horn of a hare] is unknown; therefore, even the absence of the hare's horn is false (*alīka*). There is no empirical utility in a false object, only its verbal use (*śabda-prayoga*) and imaginary cognition (*vikalpa-rūpa jñāna*) occurs. There is no empirical utility in false objects in the form of being a cause or an effect, or of being eternal or non-eternal, etc. Only the absence of known objects tends to be suitable for empirical utility. When there is no difference whatsoever of silver from real silver, i.e., the difference is unknown, how can the cognition [of imaginary silver] be possible? If the cognition of difference is accepted, then the cognition of the difference of imaginary silver from real silver is possible, but cognition of difference is unknown (*aprasiddha*) in *akhyāti*; therefore, even the cognition of difference of imaginary silver from real silver is not possible. In this manner, due to the non-existence (*asambhava*) in real silver of the absentee (*pratiyogin*) in the form of cognition of difference, the absence of the cognition of difference in real silver that is an absentee of silver is false, and the causation of activity in that cognition of difference is non-existent too. Therefore, for the Prābhākara Mīmāṃsaka, in the case of real silver before one's eyes, the particular cognition alone, that there is silver-ness-qualified silver, is the cause for the activity of the person desirous of silver (*VP* 7.66, 317-8).

Even though there is no erroneous cognition in *akhyāti* at all, and all cognition is true, sometimes activity is successful and sometimes not; therefore, the cause for this [from the Prābhākara standpoint] needs to be explained as follows. Activity that is caused by cognition of particulars is successful, while that caused by absence of cognition of difference is unsuccessful. If, even in the location of real silver, the activity is said to be caused by absence of cognition of difference, then everywhere the same activity ought to occur, and

there will remain no difference of success or failure. Therefore, the cause of successful activity is considered to be cognition of particulars. Where there is no activity towards false silver by a person desirous of silver, there, refraining from activity is the absence of activity, and its cause is the absence of cognition of silver as qualified by silver-ness. But there too, there is no cognition of the absence of silver as an erroneous cognition. Since activity and refraining from activity are mutually absentee (*pratiyogin*) and absence, the cause of activity as an absentee is the cognition of silver qualified by silver-ness; the cause of refraining from activity as the absence of activity is the absence of cognition of silver qualified by silver-ness. Thus, in *akhyāti*, where there is no object and yet there is activity of the person desirous of the object, the causes are the recollection of the desired [object], etc., and the absence of the cognition of difference, etc., and not cognition of the qualified. Where there is mother-of-pearl and the cognition “this is silver,” there is not only one cognition, but the “this” form of mother-of-pearl is the general cognition and the recollection of silver with suppressed that-ness (*pramuṣṭa-tattā*). Although activity occurs due to both of these cognitions, it occurs only when there is the absence of the cognition of difference between these two cognitions, and, upon the cognition of difference occurring, no activity occurs. Therefore, the absence of the cognition of difference, along with the two cognitions mentioned, is the cause of activity.

Many *akhyāti* authors have also accepted activity due to the absence of the apprehension of non-relation (*asambandha-grāhābhāva*). Their purport is that there is non-relation of silver-ness in mother-of-pearl, and also the identity-relation of silver is not in mother-of-pearl. The person who cognizes this will not engage in activity. The meaning here is similar to the absence of apprehension of difference (*bheda-grāhābhāva* = *bheda-jñānābhāva*). But the activity that occurs in this fashion is unsuccessful. In contrast, where cognition of the particular is the cause of the activity of the person desirous of the object in the place where the object resides, the activity is always successful.

In this manner, for the Prābhākara Mīmāṃsaka, erroneous cognition is not established in *akhyāti*; instead, all cognitions are true. Where unsuccessful activity occurs due to the lack of discrimination of the two cognitions, there, the lack of discrimination of the two cognitions itself is called “erroneous cognition” by others. This absence of discrimination of the two cognitions, as well as the absence of discrimination between the two objects, is the technical (*pāribhāṣika*) meaning of Prabhākara’s *akhyāti* (VP 7.66, 318-9).

6.3.6.3 Nīscaldās's refutation of *akhyāti*

Nīscaldās refutes *akhyāti-vāda* in the following way.⁴⁵⁵ When a person who has acted towards (*pravṛtta*) mother-of-pearl due to erroneous cognition of silver does not gain silver, he says, "I engaged in activity unsuccessfully in a location lacking silver due to erroneous cognition of silver." Such erroneous cognition which is known through experience cannot be omitted (*lopa*). When water is negated in a desert, then too it is said, "I saw imaginary water in the desert." The experience of false water and its apprehension are also known by this negation. But according to *akhyāti*, the negation should be, "I engaged in activity towards mother-of-pearl due to recollection of silver and the non-apprehension of the difference between mother-of-pearl and silver," and "the activity in the desert took place due to recollection of water and the absence of cognition of the difference between the desert and water." Other examples of deficiency in *akhyāti* include: 1) due to the power of defect, upon contact of the eyes with mother-of-pearl, the cognition of the particular of mother-of-pearl does not occur; 2) the recollection with that-ness suppressed, despite arising, is unsuccessful; 3) the two objects differ, but that difference does not manifest; and 4) both the cognitions differ, but the difference does not appear.

According to *akhyāti*, because the apprehension (*graha*) of the difference of silver in mother-of-pearl's place obstructs activity, only the absence of apprehension of the difference of the recalled silver from the mother-of-pearl is accepted as the cause of the activity of the person desirous of silver. Similarly, in the case of real silver, the apprehension of the non-difference is the obstrucuter of the refraining from activity [of the person desirous of silver]. This is certainly experientially true, so in the case of real silver, the absence of the apprehension of non-difference will be the cause of the refraining from activity of the person desirous of silver. Thus, it should be accepted that the absence of the cognition of difference of perceived silver from real silver is the cause of the silver-seeker's activity, and the absence of the cognition of non-difference is the cause of the same person's refraining from activity. Hence, when two cognitions [one being the general cognition of the mother-of-pearl, and the other, the desired silver] arise in mother-of-pearl as "this is silver," then, according to

⁴⁵⁵ Once again, compared to Padmapāda & Prakāśātman's refutation of *akhyāti* in the *Pañcapādikā* and *Vivaraṇa* respectively (Padmapādācārya et al. 1992, 79-83), and to Vimuktātman's treatment in the *Iṣṭa-siddhi* (1933, 42-7), Nīscaldās's treatment shares similar arguments, but is more detailed. Vimuktātman's dates are uncertain and fall somewhere within 850-976 CE per Sundaram (1968, xviii-xix).

akhyāti, both the cognitions for activity and refraining from activity are there in the mother-of-pearl. a) The mother-of-pearl possesses difference from silver, but on account of defect, the cognition of silver's difference in mother-of-pearl does not occur. Therefore, the absence of cognition of difference of silver is the cause of the silver-seeker's activity. b) Actually, since there is no identity of silver in mother-of-pearl, and *akhyāti* does not accept erroneous cognition, cognition of the identity of silver in mother-of-pearl cannot ever be possible, and thus the cause of the silver-seeker's refraining from activity is also present: namely, the absence of the cognition of identity of silver in mother-of-pearl. In this manner, although the means for both activity and refraining from activity of the silver-seeker are there in mother-of-pearl, the two are mutually opposed and cannot possible exist at the same time. Due to the impossibility (*asambhava*) of the means for both activity and refraining from activity occurring simultaneously, it is not possible to abandon both, since the absence of activity itself is refraining from activity, and giving up the refraining from activity is naturally equivalent to activity. In this fashion, the *akhyāti* proponent, unable to undertake both or give up both, will become bewildered and give up his life on account of shame. Consequently, *akhyāti* is the cause for death! There are many sides to this view, but these have not been presented here by Nīscaldās, as he considers them obscure (*kliṣṭa*) (VP 7.67, 319-20).

Moreover, in *akhyāti*, even without desire, the means of erroneous cognition is established forcefully. Where one sees a dust-cloud (*dhūli-paṭala*) on a mountain that is without smoke but with fire and draws the conclusion (*parāmarśa*), "the mountain is fire-pervaded smoke-possessing, *vahni-vyāpya dhūmavān parvataḥ*," the inference of fire is a valid cognition (*pramā*). Because the object of the inference, fire, is present on the mountain, this cognition is valid, even though the probans (*vyāpya*), in the form of smoke, is not present. Due to the absence of the probans (*hetu*) as smoke in the mountain, the cognition of the relation of smoke as pervaded by fire on the mountain cannot be possible in *akhyāti* because, there is no actual relation to smoke in the mountain. If erroneous cognition is accepted, then the cognition of the relation to smoke in the mountain can occur in a mountain without smoke. But here, since erroneous cognition is not accepted, even if the cognition of the relation to smoke is not possible in that which is smoke-less, the absence of the cognition of the non-relation of smoke is certainly present, and that conclusion formed by the absence of the cognition of non-relation itself becomes the cause of the inference. Then one should

accept the absence of the cognition of the non-relation of the probans in the locus (*pakṣa*) alone to be the cause of inference, because, where there is a relation of the probans in the locus, there is the absence of the cognition of non-relation of the probans in the locus, and there is also the cognition of the relation of the probans. But in the previous case, where there is no smoke in the mountain, yet inference occurs, there the cognition of the relation of the probans to the locus is not possible, but the absence of the cognition of non-relation of the probans is possible everywhere. Therefore, in *akhyāti*, the absence of the cognition of non-relation of the probans to the locus itself is [erroneously] established as the cause of inference everywhere (*VP* 7.67, 320-21).

Now the possibility of erroneous cognition via inference is established in *akhyāti* by the grabbed-by-the-throat rule (*gala-graha-nyāya*), i.e., by the *akhyāti* proponent's own logic. Just as smoke is the probans (*vyāpya*) of fire, the probans of being a means of obtaining that which is desired (*iṣṭa-sādhana*) is silver-ness, i.e., wherever there is silver-ness, there is the means of obtaining that which is desired, and in this way there is the pervasion of *iṣṭa-sādhana* in silver-ness. The essence is that if there is pervasion or invariable concomitance (*vyāpti*) of A in B, then B is the pervaded (*vyāpya*) of A. Thus, *iṣṭa-sādhana* is the pervader (*vyāpaka*), silver-ness is the pervaded (*vyāpya*). The pervaded is the probans, and the pervader is the probandum (*sādhya*).⁴⁵⁶ The *iṣṭa-sādhana* as probandum is inferred by the silver-ness probans. This meaning is not refuted (*nirvivāda*) in all views (*mata*). But in views other than the *akhyāti*, the inference of probandum as pervader is via the cognition of relation of the probans as pervaded, and in the *akhyāti* view the inference of the probandum is established via the absence of cognition of non-relation of the probans as that which is pervaded in the locus, as has been explained. Now, in *akhyāti*, where the cognition “this is silver” occurs in mother-of-pearl, although the cognition of silver-ness is not present in the “this”-object, mother-of-pearl, the cognition of the non-relation of silver-ness is also not there. Therefore, by virtue of the absence of the cognition of the non-relation of silver-ness in mother-of-pearl, by the absence of the cognition of non-relation of the probans as silver-ness in the locus as the “this”-object, the inference of the probandum as *iṣṭa-sādhana* becomes self-evident without [the requirement of] desire and by the strength of the completeness [of

⁴⁵⁶ This has been dealt with earlier in the section on inference, *VP* 2

the logic] (*sāmagrī-bala-taiṃ*). Then this inference of *iṣṭa-sādhana*tva in mother-of-pearl is indeed an erroneous cognition because mother-of-pearl does not possess *iṣṭa-sādhana*tva; instead, the inferential cognition of *iṣṭa-sādhana*tva in that which is without *iṣṭa-sādhana*tva will only be erroneous. Thus, by the grabbed-by-the-throat rule (*gala-graha-nyāya*), erroneous cognition is established in the *akhyāti* view (*VP* 7.67, 321).

In the previously stated manner, where the conclusion of smoke was reached in regard to the mountain with a dust-cloud, if the cognition of the relation with smoke in the mountain were to be accepted, that cognition would have to be considered erroneous. But if the absence of the cognition of the non-relation of the smoke in the mountain is said to be the probans of inference, then the argument succeeds even by the non-acceptance of erroneous cognition. But if the absence of cognition of non-relation of the probans is considered the cause in all inferences, then the inference of *iṣṭa-sādhana*tva by the absence of the cognition of non-relation of silver-ness in mother-of-pearl will still be established as erroneous. In this manner, erroneous cognition is established in *akhyāti*, in the manner of a rope with a noose on both ends (*ubhayataḥ pāśā-rajju-nyāya*) [i.e., the proponent is trapped both ways and cannot escape] (*VP* 7.67, 321-2).

According to Nīścaldās, there are further defects in *akhyāti*. Where tin and silver are held together and the cognition, “[both] these are silver, *ime rajate*” occurs, according to the other views, this cognition is erroneous in the tin portion and valid in the silver portion.⁴⁵⁷ The cognition makes the silver-ness property an object in tin, and also in silver; the cognition in the tin portion is silver-ness qualified and is erroneous. But in the *akhyāti* view, there is no erroneous cognition, and therefore, this cognition is true in all portions. In the silver portion, there is the apprehension of contact with silver-ness (*rajatatva-saṃsarga-graha*)⁴⁵⁸ and the tin portion is cognized as “this,” in which there is the non-apprehension of the non-relation of silver-ness. This type of conception of difference is against experience, since the tin and silver are described as an identity (*eka-rūpa*) in “[both] these are silver,” but, according to the *akhyāti* conception of difference, a different description ought to occur. The apprehension of the relation of silver-ness in the tin portion is not possible due to the non-acceptance of

⁴⁵⁷ A similar argument is made against the Prābhākaras by the fourteenth c. Naiyāyika Gaṅgeśa (Phillips and Ramanuja Tatacharya 2004, 273ff).

⁴⁵⁸ This is misprinted in the KS ed. as *rajata-saṃgraha* (322) but occurs correctly as *rajata-saṃsarga-graha* in both Nīśchaladāsa (1868, 7.56b) and also in Nīścaldās (1957, 448).

erroneous cognition [in *akhyāti*]. In the silver portion, the non-apprehension (*agraha*) of the non-relation to silver-ness can be accepted, since the apprehension of the non-relation of silver-ness in silver is not possible. But even so, there still is an apprehension of a relation by means of which the description as identity in the silver portion is possible. But where the object of *pravṛtti* is before oneself, the *pravṛtti* would occur in that case only due to a cognition qualified by contact (*saṃsarga-viśiṣṭa-jñāna*), such a rule has been described earlier,⁴⁵⁹ and this rule will be forsaken [because no activity occurs by the non-apprehension of non-relation] (*VP* 7.67, 322).

The *akhyāti* proponent may offer the following. “The cognition qualified by contact occurs only where the desired object which is the object of activity is before oneself, and not the undesired object, just as only the cognition of silver as ‘this is silver’ is qualified by silver-ness. But where the desired silver and undesired tin are both in front of one, and cognition of the undesired object also occurs as ‘this,’ similar to the desired object, in that case, even the desired silver does not have cognition qualified by silver-ness; only the absence of the cognition of non-relation of silver-ness is there. Upon accepting this, the identity description, ‘both these are silver, *ime rajate*,’ is possible. There, the ‘this’-form of tin and silver is a general cognition, and, though tin has the non-relation of silver-ness, the cognition of that non-relation does not occur due to defect, therefore, since there is the absence of the cognition of non-relation of silver-ness in tin and that non-relation never occurs in silver, there too there is absence of cognition of non-relation, and therefore, the description as one object of desire (*eka-rasa ullekha*) is possible.” If it be so said, then even with regard to the silver portion, fruitless activity ought to occur, since the cognition of the silver-ness qualification which is the cause of activity was not accepted in the silver-portion. And if the cognition of the silver-ness qualification is accepted, then the description [of tin and silver] as one object of desire will not be possible. But since activity does occur in the stated case, it will have to be accepted that the cognition of the silver-ness qualification does occur in the silver portion and the description as one object of desire does not occur. Secondly, in the *akhyāti* view, there is no erroneous cognition by which unsuccessful activity may occur; instead, the activity which occurs due to the cognition of difference of the desired

⁴⁵⁹ *VP* 7.66, 318 and on p. 203 here.

object is unsuccessful, while the activity which occurs due to the cognition of the particular is successful. Therefore, where tin and silver are before one and the cognition “[both] these are silver” occurs, although the cognition of tin and silver is the same in the “this”-form, there is the silver-ness qualified cognition in the “this”-portion of silver and the non-apprehension of the relation of silver-ness or the non-apprehension of difference of silver in the “this”-portion of tin. Where there is the non-relation of silver, there itself is the difference of silver, and therefore, there is no difference of meaning in saying the non-apprehension of difference of silver. In this way, in the case of “[both] these are silver” according to *akhyāti*, the identity description is not possible, and consequently, *akhyāti* is improper (*VP* 7.67, 322-3).

The *akhyāti* proponent raised a defect against those who accept erroneous cognition: “Even if erroneous cognition were well known, due to the doubt in all cognitions that they may be erroneous, no definite (*niṣkampa*) activity should occur.” This defect is also not possible, according to Nīścaldās. In *akhyāti*, although there is no erroneous cognition and all cognitions are true (*yathārtha*), even according to their view, sometimes the *pravṛtti* due to a cognition is successful and sometimes it is unsuccessful. Therefore, even *akhyāti* has accepted the difference of cognitions effecting success or failure in activity. Wherever activity occurs on account of cognition qualified by contact (*saṃsarga-viśiṣṭa-jñāna*), it is successful, and, where it occurs due to two cognitions of unapprehended difference, it is unsuccessful. Even the *akhyāti* proponent accepts that the two cognitions that are the cause of unsuccessful activity are invalid (*apramā*). Thus, even if validity/invalidity of the cognitions due to truth/falsity of the object have not been accepted, still the validity/invalidity, which is the cause of the difference as success/failure of activity/refraining from activity, is desired by the *akhyāti* proponent as well. Now if *akhyāti* has an aversion only towards the term “invalidity,” the difference between the qualified cognition causing successful activity and the two cognitions of unapprehended difference causing unsuccessful activity is experientially known [as true], and even *akhyāti* has accepted it. Then, it only remains to use a different term for practical differentiation, in which case it is appropriate to conduct dealings (*vyavahāra*) using the well-known term alone.

Further, even upon not accepting erroneous cognition, and instead accepting as true cognitions both the unapprehended difference that leads to unsuccessful activity, and also the silver-ness qualified cognition in silver that leads to successful activity, on seeing the

common property of cognizability (*jñātatva*) in them both, a doubt is possible. Just as there are two cognitions of unapprehended difference present in mother-of-pearl, and their difference is not apprehended, is this cognition [of silver-ness in silver] in the form of two cognitions of unapprehended difference, or is it just one cognition without difference? If it is in the form of two cognitions of unapprehended difference, then the silver will not be gained through *pravṛtti*. Due to such a doubt also, even in *akhyāti*, definite activity is not possible. Thus both views [*akhyāti*, and that which acknowledges erroneous cognition] share the same unfeasibility of doubt-free activity. Thus, Nīścaldās concludes, *akhyāti-vāda* also is improper (*VP* 7.68, 323-4). Only *anirvacanīya-khyāti* is free from fault (*nirdoṣa*).

6.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter began with Nīścaldās's explanation of erroneous cognitions via the Advaita theory of superimposition (*adhyāsa*) and two schemes of classification of its different types (Figure 10). The possible objections to the theory and their refutation were also presented. The Advaita theory of erroneous cognition, *anirvacanīya-khyāti*, that the object of erroneous cognition is logically indeterminate (*anirvacanīya*), was presented next. The mechanics of an erroneous cognition by means of a *vṛtti* were analyzed, and the agency (*karaṇatā*) of superimposition was investigated from the perspectives of: 1) an obscure thirteenth century Advaitin named Kavitārkika Cakravartī Nṛsiṃha Bhaṭṭopādhyāya (KCNB); 2) Sarvajñātman (eleventh c.), author of the *Samkṣepa-śārīraka* (*SS*); and 3) Prakāśātman (1000 CE), the author of the *Pañcapādikā Vivaraṇa* (*PPV*). The *SS* and *PPV* views were reconciled, but the debate between KCNB perspective and that of substantive cognition (*dharmi-jñāna-vāda*, DJV) was further explored through a presentation of four possible views on the locus of the erroneous cognition. The only correct view was deemed to be that of DJV, namely, that the erroneous cognition is of the form of a *vṛtti* of ignorance (*avidyā*) in the shape of the superimposed object.

Then Nīścaldās presented five non-Advaita theories of erroneous cognition (*khyāti-vāda*) and their inadequacies as compared to Advaita's *anirvacanīya-khyāti*. The first three opposing theories were presented and refuted in short order: namely, *sat-khyāti*, which holds that the object of erroneous cognition is real; *akhyāti*, which holds that the object of erroneous cognition is unreal; and *ātma-khyāti*, which holds that the object of erroneous

cognition is a mental state projected by the self. The Nyāya theory of *anyathā-khyāti*, which holds that the object of erroneous cognition is real but is present elsewhere, was presented at great length along with the Nyāya arguments against the Advaita *anirvacanīya-khyāti*, followed by a systematic refutation from within the Nyāya framework, and also from the Advaita standpoint. Finally, Nīścaldās also presented in considerable detail the Prābhākara *akhyāti* theory, that the erroneous cognition is the failure to distinguish between the real recollection and real substratum, followed by its detailed refutation.

In the process, Nīścaldās, as the *akhyāti* proponent, raised the objection regarding the defect in the view of those who acknowledge erroneous cognition, including Advaita, namely, the impossibility of definite activity due to doubt. In refuting the objection, although Nīścaldās showed that the same defect existed in *akhyāti* also, he has not yet refuted the defect in Advaita [lit. *sva-mata*, his own view]. In order to address this issue, Nīścaldās goes on to examine the nature of validity (*pramāṭva*) and invalidity (*apramāṭva*), their arising and types of cognition. This will be taken up in the next chapter so that the issue of activity in the face of doubt can be resolved. This will be followed by a discussion on the nature of ignorance, as well as that of the *jīva* and *Īśvara*, and their relation, also in the next chapter.

7 Validity (*Pramāṭva*), Ignorance (*Ajñāna*), *Jīva* and *Īśvara*

In the previous chapter, in the course of his examination of the Prābhākara theory of erroneous cognition, *akhyāti*, Nīścaldās presented the *akhyāti* objection to those who acknowledge erroneous cognition, including Advaita, namely: the impossibility of definite activity (*niṣkampa pravṛtti*) because one doubts the validity of the cognition. Although Nīścaldās dismissed this objection by showing that *akhyāti* also suffers from the same defect, the inapplicability to Advaita's *anirvacanīya-khyāti* still needs to be demonstrated. Nīścaldās addresses this next, by examining the nature of validity (*pramāṭva*) and invalidity (*apramāṭva*), their arising and the types of their cognitions. This is required because whether activity occurs or not is dependent on the ascertainment of validity. For Advaita, notions of activity and agency are only relevant in the empirical (*vyāvahārika*) sphere, thus Nīścaldās's examination of validity is laying the groundwork for his showing that the empirical reality depends on the non-dual ultimate (*pāramārthika*) reality. Before presenting the Advaita theory of intrinsic validity (*svataḥ-prāmāṇya-vāda*), Nīścaldās offers the Nyāya theory of extrinsic (*parataḥ*) validity and invalidity, and the Advaita response to it. He then proceeds to other non-Advaita views concerning validity and invalidity, such as those of the Prābhākaras, Bhāṭṭas, and of a Mīmāṃsaka named Murāri Mīśra, which he refutes as well. Then Nīścaldās returns to resolve the issue of the impossibility of definite activity, which was raised during the discussion of *akhyāti*. That brings to a close his answer to the second question pertaining to *vṛttis*, namely, “what is the cause of a *vṛtti*?”

Chapter 7 then continues with Nīścaldās's preparations for his response to the final question regarding *vṛttis*, “what is the purpose of a *vṛtti*?” In short, the primary purpose of a *vṛtti* is stated to be the cessation (*nivṛtti*) of ignorance (*ajñāna*). This then necessitates an investigation of ignorance, its locus, and its object. Ignorance is presented as without beginning, and various doubts concerning the reality of ignorance are addressed. Within Advaita itself, there are differing opinions as to whether *jīva* (the individual) or *Īśvara* (the theistic creator) is the locus of ignorance. Nīścaldās presents these views and explores the merits and demerits of each: 1) Vidyāraṇya's Theory of Appearance (*ābhāsa-vāda*); 2) the *Vivaraṇa* Theory of Reflection (*bimba-pratibimba-vāda* of Prakāśātman); 3) the Theory of Delimitation (*avaccheda-vāda*); and 4) the theory of there being only one *jīva* (*eka-jīva-vāda*),

dr̥ṣṭi-sr̥ṣṭi-vāda). This chapter concludes with Nīścaldās's resolution of the differences primarily between the Theory of Appearance and The Theory of Reflection.

7.1 Validity (*Pramāṭva*) and Invalidity (*Apramāṭva*)

According to Nīścaldās, the nature of validity and invalidity of cognition, their arising, and the types of their cognition are important to consider, because, if a cognition is ascertained as invalid, then no activity (*pravṛtti*) will arise from it; if there is doubt regarding validity, then the activity occurs with hesitation [lit. *sakampa*, tremblingly/with trepidation]; and if the validity is certain, then definite activity occurs. Earlier, (*VP* 1.1, 1-2; 7.3, 209), valid cognition (*pramā*) was defined thus: the cognition that is different from recollection, non-negated (*abādhita*), and pertaining to the object (*artha-gocara*), is a valid cognition (*pramā*), and an invalid cognition (*apramā*) is that which is different from valid cognition. From this, it is known that a valid cognition has the property (*dharma*) of validity (*pramāṭva*); a cognition that is not valid has the property of invalidity (*apramāṭva*); and recollection does not possess technical (*pāribhāṣika*) validity. But recollection should also be accepted as possessing validity that is applicable (*upayogī*) to activity. A person's activity occurs even in a location where the recollection of a desired object occurs, and when the recollection is considered to possess validity, definite activity occurs. In such cases, the term "validity" is used to refer to the property of truth (*yathārthatva-dharma*). If the use of the term "valid cognition (*pramā*)" for recollection is utterly unacceptable, then instead of the sentence "definite activity occurs due to validity," one should state, "definite activity occurs due to cognition of truth (*yathārthatva-jñāna*)."
(*VP* 7.69, 324-6).

7.1.1 The Nyāya Theory of Extrinsic (*Parataḥ*) Validity and Invalidity

According to Nyāya, validity (*prāmāṇya* = *pramāṭva*) is produced by something other than the means of effecting cognition, and it is cognized by something other than the means of cognizing (*jñāpaka*) cognition. If the means of cognition such as the senses, inference, etc., were to produce validity, then all cognition would be valid, and invalid cognition would not be possible. Validity is produced by an additional means, which is a quality (*guṇa*). Invalidity of cognition also is produced externally, since erroneous cognition is produced by external defect (*VP* 7.70, 326-7). Where the cognition of pots, etc., occurs through the eyes and other means, the cognition occurs in the form, "this is a pot," and, where the pot-

cognition is directly cognized (*pratyakṣa honā*) by the means of cognition in the form of the mind, it takes the form “I know the pot.” The object of this [second] mental cognition is both the pot-cognition and the pot, since the pot-cognition is termed a determinate cognition (*vyavasāya*), while the [second] cognition of the pot-cognition is called an after-cognition or reflexive cognition (*anuvyavasāya*), i.e., that which follows (*anusārin*) a cognition (*vyavasāya*). The nature of an after-cognition is that without forsaking the object of the cognition, it illumines the object along with the cognition. The *ātmā* is also the object of the reflexive cognition, since it is the rule that, when any one quality (*guṇa*) is apprehended from among the particular qualities (*viśeṣa guṇa*) of *ātmā*, namely, cognition (*jñāna*), desire, action, happiness, sorrow, and dislike, *ātmā* is apprehended.⁴⁶⁰ Thus, the cognition, “I know the pot,” illumines: 1) the pot; 2) the pot-cognition; and 3) the basis of cognition, *ātmā*. The cognition pertaining to this triad (*tripuṭī*) is termed the after-cognition, and its means is the contact with the mind.⁴⁶¹ Although the cognition of the cognition and of cognition-ness (*jñānatva*) occurs through an after-cognition, the cognition of validity (*pramāṭva*) does not occur until after the person’s successful activity occurs, in the following instant via the inferential cognition of validity in the activity-producing cognition. For example, when a person desirous of water obtains water after a perceptual cognition of a pool followed by activity towards the pool, the following inference occurs to the person. “This water-cognition is valid, because of its resulting in a successful activity. Wherever successful activity results, validity resides there, for example, in an ascertained valid cognition.”⁴⁶² The counter-example (*vyatireka-drṣṭānta*) is as follows. “Wherever the resulting of successful activity does not occur, validity does not reside there, for example, in the case of the silver-cognition in mother-of-pearl.”

The Advaitin responds to this Nyāya position as follows. There are two types of after-cognition: 1) “I know [this is] water;” and 2) the after-cognition “I infer water,” which occurs

⁴⁶⁰ Athalye’s explanation is that the *ātmā* is the substratum for the qualities *buddhi*, *sukha*, *duḥkha*, *icchā*, *dveṣa*, *prayatna*, *dharma*, *adharma*, none of which can reside in inanimate substances (Annambhaṭṭa and Govardhanamisra 1963, 135)

⁴⁶¹ The mind is said to have 1) a self-conjoined, *ātmā*-inherence relation (*sva-saṃyukta-ātmā-samavāya-sambandha*) with the pot-cognition, 2) a self-conjoined, *ātmā*-inhering-inherence relation (*sva-saṃyukta-ātmā-samaveta-samavāya-sambandha*) with the cognition-ness, 3) contact-relation (*saṃyoga-sambandha*) with *ātmā*, 4) conjoined-inherence relation (*saṃyukta-samavāya-sambandha*) with *ātmā*, *ātmā*-ness and 5) an extra-ordinary (*alaukika*) *jñāna-lakṣaṇa* relation with the pot (VP 7.71, 398).

⁴⁶² *idaṃ jala-jñānaṃ pramā, saphala-pravṛtti-janakatvāt. yatra yatra saphala-pravṛtti-janakatvaṃ tatra tatra pramāṭvaṃ. yathā nirṇīta-pramāyām* (VP 7.71, 329).

following the ascertainment of validity. Thus, in (2), the cognition apprehending assemblage (*jñāna-grāhaka-sāmagrī*) ascertains the validity of the [inferential] cognition, which essentially supports the Advaita position, namely, the apprehension of intrinsic validity (*svataḥ-prāmāṇya-grāha*) (*VP* 7.71, 329-32)!⁴⁶³ Further, cognition never has uncognized-ness (*ajñātātā*), and so the statement “Due to the absence of cognized-ness in cognition, an after-cognition in connection with the cognition occurs,” is totally improper. Nobody ever has such a doubt as to ask, “did I cognize the pot or not?” which would be the case if the cognition of the pot remained uncognized. Advaita considers the statement “The illuminator of cognition is an after-cognition” to be improper (*VP* 7.77, 336). The difference between the two cognitions, “this is a pot,” and “I know [this] pot” is explained in Advaita as follows. In the cognition “this is a pot,” the pot’s cognized-ness (*jñātātā*) does not appear, and in the cognition “I know [this] pot,” it does. The object of the second cognition, “I know [this] pot,” is the cognized-ness resident in the pot, and not the pot-cognition (*VP* 7.77, 337).

Moreover, the Naiyāyika view, that instead of the means to cognition, a quality (*guṇa*) is considered the cause of the production (*utpatti*) of validity, is also improper. The quality is said to be the contact (*saṃyoga*) of the sense organ with additional parts (*adhika avayavam se*) in the place of perception (*pratyakṣa-sthala*); such a quality is not possible in the impartite perception of form, etc. The quality [that causes the cognition of validity] in the case of inference, in the form of the cognition of the pervaded probans (*vyāpya-hetu*) in the locus (*pakṣa*), is also not possible, because, contact [with additional parts] is impossible owing to the absence of parts in the impartite form, etc. Where fire is inferred by the erroneous cognition of smoke in a dust-cloud on the mountain with fire, although the said quality is not present, the valid inferential cognition of fire still occurs there. Hence, it is clear that it is not possible for a quality to produce validity, but instead, only the means of general cognition (*jñāna-sāmānya kī sāmagrī*) produces validity (*VP* 7.82, 340).

⁴⁶³ Nyāya escapes the flaw of infinite regress (*anavasthā*), that to illumine the first cognition, a second cognition is required, for the second, a third, and so on, by not requiring the illumination of an object’s cognition for the object’s illumination. The illumination is required only for its own activity. *viśaya ke prakāśa maiṃ apāne prakāśa kī jñāna apekṣā karaṃ nahīṃ, kintu savyavahāra maiṃ prakāśa kī apekṣā hai* (*VP* 7.71, 330-1).

7.1.2 Other Non-Advaita Views on Validity

Nīścaldās presents and refutes other rival views as well. According to the Prābhākara Mīmāṃsā view, all cognitions illumine the collective triad (*tripuṭī*) of the cognition, cognizer and the cognized. Thus, the cognition also has its own nature and its validity as its object (*VP* 7.73, 332). The Prābhākara view conforms to (Advaita) doctrine (*siddhānta*) on the following points: 1) the cognitions of pot, etc., do not require an *anuvyavasāya* for their own illumination; 2) nothing other than the means of apprehending cognition is required for the apprehension of validity; 3) all cognitions have the triad [of cognition, cognizer, and cognized] as their object, and no cognition occurs pertaining only to the object; cognition pertaining to only the object is unknown (*asiddha*); 4) all cognitions pertain to the triad alone, in the manner of “I cognize the pot.” Even in the cognition, “this is a pot,” when the pot-cognition occurs after the sense-organ has contacted the pot, this cognition illuminates the pot, the nature of the cognition, and its basis, the *ātmā*. Similarly, this cognition also illumines its own property (*dharma*), validity. Thus the pot-cognition does not require another cognition for its illumination. The Prābhākara view is only contrary to the Advaita doctrine in holding that the cognition also illuminates itself while pertaining to the triad. The agent (*kartā*) of an action (*kriyā*) cannot also be the result (*karma*) of that action. Therefore, the agent of the illumination of cognition, namely, the cognition itself, cannot also be the result of the illumination, the cognition. In Advaita, cognition is itself illumination, so the contradiction does not apply (*VP* 7.80, 338-9).

Murāri Miśra (a Mīmāṃsaka, ca. 1150-1220 CE)⁴⁶⁴ accepts the illumination of the cognition by the after-cognition (*anuvyavasāya*) and also the fact that the validity of a cognition is illumined by the illumination of that cognition, i.e., the after-cognition or the inference. Therefore, the doubt of validity does not occur after the after-cognition (*VP* 7.74, 332-3). Nīścaldās considers Murāri Miśra’s view to be equivalent to the Nyāya view and therefore improper. Although Murāri Miśra’s view also accepts the illumination of validity by the cognition-illuminating after-cognition, this difference is not significant (*akiñcitkara*) because Nīścaldās thinks that accepting the illumination of a cognition by an after-cognition while still considering cognition to be non-luminous is a gross mistake (*VP* 7.78, 338).

⁴⁶⁴ Murāri Miśra is considered to be a “minor Mīmāṃsaka” and the founder of a third school of Mīmāṃsā (Verpoorten 1987, 44).

Kumārila Bhaṭṭa's⁴⁶⁵ view is that the cognition of the cognition of pots, etc., is not in the form of perception, because the cognition quality (*guṇa*) is not suitable for perception. Therefore, the cognition of cognition is only as an inference, and is not mentally perceived (*mānasa-pratyakṣa*) (*VP* 7.75, 333-4). Nīścaldās considers this view to be even more improper than the Nyāya view. A portion of this view, wherein “inference, which is the illuminator of cognition, illuminates validity,” differs from the Nyāya view, and is similar to the Advaita position. But Nīścaldās considers accepting the illumination of this perceptual cognition, which immediately (*aparokṣa*) cognizes objects such as pot, etc., as only in mediate form via inference to be quite ridiculous (*hāsyā kā āspada*) (*VP* 7.79, 338).

7.1.3 The Advaita Theory of Intrinsic Validity (*Svataḥ-prāmāṇya-vāda*)

Advaita defines apprehension of intrinsic validity as “the apprehension of validity by the means of apprehension of the cognition which is free from defect.”⁴⁶⁶ According to Nīścaldās, the illuminator of the validity of cognition is the witness-consciousness (*sākṣī*) accompanied by the absence of defect. However, the witness-consciousness does not apprehend invalidity, because the attribute of erroneous cognition is produced either by a defect, or by the causation of unsuccessful activity, or by the manifestation (*avabhāsa*) of that which has a different reality (*viśama sattā*) than the substratum. Thus, the attributes of erroneous cognition are connected with (*ghaṭita*) a defect, unsuccessful activity, and a different reality. These are not the objects of the witness-consciousness, and so the definition of the apprehension of intrinsic validity (*svataḥ-prāmāṇya-graha*) does not over-pervade (*ativyāpti*) into this invalidity. Instead, as with the Naiyāyikas, invalidity is cognized on seeing unsuccessful activity. If it were accepted that invalidity, too, is produced by the same means of cognition, then the shortcoming could arise that “all cognitions should be invalid.” But in the production of invalidity, the means that produces the cognition, i.e., the cause, is defective, and therefore, this shortcoming does not arise. Invalid cognition is produced by defective eyes, [defective] inference, etc. The production of invalidity-qualified erroneous cognition itself is considered the production of invalidity in this text [i.e., the *VP*], while the

⁴⁶⁵ Kumārila Bhaṭṭa fl. eighth c. CE according to Dasgupta (1922, 1:129), or between 600-700 CE according to Verpoorten (1987, 22), and otherwise subscribes to the theory of intrinsic validity (Dasgupta 1922, 1:460; Verpoorten 1987, 23-4).

⁴⁶⁶ *doṣābhāva-sahita jñāna-grāhaka sāmāgrī taiḥ pramāṭva kā graha hovai tākūṃ svataḥ-prāmāṇya-graha kahaiṃ haiṃ* (*VP* 7.81, 339).

production of validity is only through the general means of cognition (*jñāna kī sāmānya sāmāgrī taim*) (*VP* 7.81, 339-40).

The objection can be raised: “If it is accepted that the means of general cognition produces validity, then even in the case of an erroneous cognition, the means of general cognition being present, a valid cognition should occur.” Niścaldās refutes this objection in the following manner. Where there is a defect, valid cognition does not occur; therefore, the defect is an obstacle in the production of validity. The absence of obstacles alone is the cause of the production of all effects (*kārya*); therefore, validity can only be produced by means of cognition that are free from defect. Here, “the production of validity” is intended to convey the meaning (*tātparya*), “the production of a cognition that is qualified by validity (*pramāṭva-viśiṣṭa-jñāna kī utpatti*).” Therefore, it is not improper to speak of “the production of the property (*dharma*) of validity.” The production of validity occurs intrinsically (*svataḥ*), not extrinsically, because the valid cognition is produced by defect-free cognition-producing means such as eyes, etc. It may appear that external validity is being accepted because the senses, inference, etc., themselves, without the absence of defect, are said the means for general cognition; but it was also said above that the absence of defect, too, was a cause in the production of validity; therefore, validity is produced by something other than the means of general cognition. Still, the shortcoming (*āpatti*) of extrinsic validity could occur only if the requirement of some positive (*bhāva-rūpa*) means in excess of the means for general cognition were accepted, but the apprehension of extrinsic validity is not established merely by the requirement of absence of defect, which is negative (*abhāva-rūpa*).

The means of cognition is the witness-consciousness, i.e., the cognition of validity of cognition occurs by the witness-consciousness accompanied by absence of defect, and the production of invalidity occurs from the cognition-producing means such as sense organs, inference, etc., accompanied by defect. Since the sense organs, inference, etc. are the means of general cognition, and defect is external to them, invalidity is produced extrinsically. After an erroneous cognition, when activity (*pravṛtti*) occurs and the result is not obtained, an inferential cognition of invalidity occurs. Since the means of apprehending inferential cognition is different from the witness-consciousness, the apprehension of invalidity also occurs extrinsically. In this manner, in the instant of the production of cognition itself, the

nature of the cognition is illumined by the witness-consciousness, and the validity residing in the cognition (*jñāna-vṛtti pramāṭva*) is also illumined (*VP* 7.82, 340-1).

7.2 The Removal of the Shortcoming Raised During the *Akhyāti* Treatment

Having established intrinsic validity for Advaita, Nīscaldās now returns to address the shortcoming raised during the earlier discussion of *akhyāti-vāda*. “When the conviction of validity occurs, no doubt occurs regarding its validity. Yet, when there is doubt regarding error (*bhramatva-sandeha*), even in the presence of the certainty of validity, there will be absence of definite activity (*niṣkampa pravṛtti*).” Nīscaldās considers this statement by the *akhyāti* proponent to be untrue. Certainty of validity alone opposes doubt regarding validity. Certainty of validity does not oppose doubt regarding error because doubt and certainty are opposed only with regard to the same object. In the above [*akhyāti* proponent’s] statement, the objects of the certainty of validity and the doubt regarding error are different, namely, validity and error respectively, so the *akhyāti* statement above [that doubt regarding error is not opposed by the conviction of validity] is proper (*saṅgata*). However, where the certainty of validity occurs for a cognition, it is known by experience that neither certainty of error nor doubt regarding error occurs for that cognition; therefore, certainty of validity and doubt regarding error are also opposed.

Upon further reflection, Nīscaldās continues, there is no difference between doubt regarding validity and doubt regarding error; both are one and the same. Doubt regarding validity is of the form, “is this cognition valid or not?” Here, the positive portion (*vidhi koṭi*) is validity, and the negative portion (*niṣedha koṭi*) is error (*bhramatva*), because, upon negating validity, only error remains. Similarly, doubt regarding error takes the form, “is this cognition erroneous or not?” In this, the positive portion is error and the negative portion is validity, because, upon negating error in a cognition, only validity remains. Thus, both portions, error and validity, are the same in both doubts, and therefore, there is no difference between doubt regarding validity and doubt regarding error. That in which the positive portion is validity, is called doubt regarding validity, and that in which the positive portion is error, is called doubt regarding error. The two doubts thus being the same, when there is certainty of validity, just as doubt regarding validity no longer persists, similarly doubt regarding error also does not persist. Therefore, in Advaita, even on accepting erroneous

cognition, definite activity is possible. The certainty of that which is *anirvacanīya* is called erroneous certainty (*bhrama-niścaya*) (*VP* 7.83, 341-2).

Erroneous cognition is of three kinds: 1) doubt; 2) certainty; and 3) cognition through contra-factual argument (*tarka-jñāna*).⁴⁶⁷ Contra-factual argument (*tarka*) is the factitious supposition (*āropa*) of the pervader (*vyāpaka*) due to the factitious supposition of the pervaded (*vyāpya*).⁴⁶⁸ For example, “If there were no fire, then there would be no smoke either,” if such a cognition occurred in a location with smoke and fire, it is a contra-factual argument (*tarka*). Here, the absence of fire is the pervaded, and the absence of smoke is the pervader, and since the factitious supposition of the absence of smoke is made by the factitious supposition of the absence of fire, and despite the presence of fire and smoke, the cognition of absence of fire and absence of smoke occurs; therefore, it is erroneous. If an error occurs despite being negated (*bādhā*), it is called factitious supposition (*āropa*). In this case, there is the existence of smoke and fire; hence, their absence is negated. Despite their being present, the erroneous cognition of the absence of fire and smoke occurs through a person’s desire, and therefore, it is called factitious supposition. Such contra-factual argument that is of the form of factitious supposition is also included within erroneous cognition (*VP* 7.84, 342-3).

7.3 The Nature of Ignorance

Having concluded a detailed analysis of the types of *vṛttis* and their causes, including erroneous cognitions, in *VP* 7, Nīscaldās now takes up the final question, “What is the purpose of a *vṛtti*?” in *VP* 8.⁴⁶⁹ He tells us in brief that the primary purpose of a *vṛtti* is the cessation (*nivṛtti*) of ignorance (*ajñāna*). The cessation of ignorance located in the consciousness (*cetana*) delimited (*avacchinna*) by a pot, etc., is brought about by the *vṛtti* in the non-*ātmā* form of a pot, etc.; the cessation of ignorance located in the non-delimited consciousness is brought about by the impartite (*akhaṇḍa*) *vṛtti* in the form of Brahman (*VP* 8.1, 343).

⁴⁶⁷ See *TS* 64: “*ayathārthānubhavas trividhaḥ saṁśaya-viparyaya-tarka-bhedāt*. False experience is of three kinds: doubt, error, and contra-factual argument” (Annambhaṭṭa and Govardhanamisra 1963, 56).

⁴⁶⁸ See Chakrabarti (2010, 32-3) and also Athalye (Annambhaṭṭa and Govardhanamisra 1963, 356) where the definition of *tarka* is provided as *vyāpyāropeṇa vyāpakāropanam*.

⁴⁶⁹ The three questions were first introduced in Ch. 5 on p. 111: 1) What is a *vṛtti*? 2) Who is the cause of a *vṛtti*? and 3) What is its purpose?

Before Niścaldās can further elaborate on the purpose of a *vr̥tti*, he must undertake a thorough investigation of ignorance. According to Vācaspati Miśra,⁴⁷⁰ the individual (*jīva*) is the locus (*āśraya*) of ignorance which is destroyed by *vr̥tti*, and Brahman is its object, i.e., ignorance resides in the *jīva* and conceals Brahman. According to Prakāśātman, the author of the *Vivaraṇa*, and others, pure consciousness alone is the locus and object of ignorance. Just as the illumination of a pot, etc., caused by cognition is termed the object-ness (*viśayatā*) of cognition, similarly the covering up of one's nature caused by ignorance is termed the object-ness of ignorance. Since being a *jīva* (*jīva-bhāva*) and being Īśvara (*īśvara-bhāva*) depends on ignorance, the *jīva* caused by ignorance cannot possibly be the locus of ignorance (*VP* 8.2, 343). To facilitate the understanding of this, Niścaldās next explores the nature of *jīva* and Īśvara, but first, a closer look at ignorance.

This one entity (*padārtha*), ignorance, has several names: *ajñāna*, *avidyā*, *prakṛti*, *māyā*, *śakti* and *pradhāna*. Among these, the difference between *māyā* and *avidyā* is merely a view held by some (*eka-deśī-vāda*), and not an actual difference. The Naiyāyikas and others term the absence of cognition itself ignorance. For Advaita, the entity that has the power (*śakti*) to conceal (*āvaraṇa*) and project (*vikṣepa*), which is beginning-less and has the appearance of existence (*bhāva-rūpa*), is named *ajñāna*, ignorance. It is called *avidyā* due to its being destroyed by knowledge (*vidyā*); it is called *prakṛti* and *pradhāna* on account of being the material cause of the apparent creation (*prapañca*), *māyā* on account of effecting difficulties (*durghaṭa*), and *śakti* due to absence of independence (*svatantratā*) (*VP* 8.3, 344). Regarding the beginning-less reality of ignorance, Niścaldās lists a variety of possible doubts.

- 1) Advaita texts state either that ignorance is different from consciousness, or that it is not different – both of these cannot be possible. By *śruti* statements such as “*neha nānāsti kiñcana*, there is no diversity here [in this creation] (*BU* 4.4.19),” that which is different from consciousness is negated, and the non-difference of inert consciousness is not possible. Along with this, there is mutual opposition between difference and non-difference, so it is not possible to say that ignorance is different and non-different (*bhinnābhinna*) from consciousness.

⁴⁷⁰ Author of the *Bhāmatī* sub-commentary on *BS ŚBh*, 842 CE.

- 2) By being in opposition to the *śruti* teachings of non-duality, it is also improper to attribute reality to ignorance. However, by being the cause of creation (*prapañca*), it cannot be considered false or imaginary (*tucchatā-svarūpa*). Since mutually opposed properties (*dharma*) cannot reside in the same substratum (*adhikaraṇa*), it is also not possible for ignorance to be called both real and unreal (*sat-asat*).
- 3) If ignorance is considered to have parts (*sāvayava*), in Nyāya the material cause (*upādāna*) that initiates a substance (*dravya*) is called a part, and in Sāṅkhya, the transforming material cause (*pariṇāmī upādāna*) is called a part. If only the material cause is called a part, then one will have to accept space, which is the material cause of sound, as a part of sound, and similarly the pot, etc., which are the material causes of their own qualities (*guṇa*) and action (*kriyā*), will be the parts of the qualities such as color, etc., and actions such as movement, etc. Therefore, only the material causes of a substance are termed parts, not the material causes of others. Only that which results from parts is said to have parts (*sāvayava*). Now if ignorance were a substance, it could have parts, but it is not possible for ignorance to have the property of being a substance (*dravyatā*) because substances are of two kinds, eternal (*nitya*) and non-eternal (*anitya*). If ignorance were considered an eternal substance, it would be improper to consider it with parts, and its destruction by knowledge would not occur. If ignorance were considered a non-eternal substance, then being different from *ātmā*, its parts would also be non-eternal, and if these parts were non-eternal, an infinite regress would result. If the final part were considered eternal as in the case of an atom or of primordial matter (*pradhāna*, same as *prakṛti*), the *śruti* teaching non-duality would be contradicted, so the acceptance of the eternal atom in Nyāya, and of the eternal primordial matter in Sāṅkhya, is opposed to *śruti*. Thus, since ignorance cannot be a substance, it is not possible for it to be with parts.
- 4) To say that the material cause of the empirical world (*prapañca*), ignorance, is impartite is also not possible, since a material cause is always with parts. Although in Nyāya, space, the material cause of sound, is considered impartite, this is opposed to the *śruti*, “*tasmād vā etasmād ātmana ākāśaḥ sambhūtaḥ*, space came into being from that which is this *ātmā*” (*TU* 2.1.1).

- 5) Although in Nyāya, the atom that is the material cause of the dyad is considered part-less, yet, due to the defects of the absence of contact of part-less atoms and then the arising of the dyads, etc., the author of the *Brahma-sūtra* has refuted the part-less atom in *BS* 2.2.⁴⁷¹ Therefore, it is also not possible to maintain that the material cause of the empirical world is part-less. The fact that ignorance is the material cause of the empirical world is known through the *śruti*, “*māyāṃ tu prakṛtiṃ vidyāt*, One should recognize *māyā*, the illusory power, as *prakṛti*, primal matter (*ŚvetU* 4.10),” because *māyā* and ignorance are identical.
- 6) Thus ignorance cannot possibly be with parts or part-less, nor can it be both part-less and with parts since the two attributes are mutually opposed. Thus, since ignorance cannot possibly be described by any property (*dharma*), several texts have described it as *anirvacanīya*. To consider such an *anirvacanīya* ignorance as without beginning and real is not possible. Its reality has already been negated.

Nīścaldās refutes all of these doubts: Just as ignorance is different from reality, it is also different from unreality. Therefore, ignorance does not have non-negatable reality, but it is acknowledged to have a reality that is different from the empty (*tuccha-rūpa*) unreality, and therefore, it has been called *anirvacanīya*, other than real and unreal. An entity to which words never pertain is not the only thing that is *anirvacanīya*; the technical sense of the word *anirvacanīya* is that which is different from Brahman, ultimate reality, and also different from the unreal, as the unreal is always devoid of reality and manifestation (*sattā-sphūrṭi-śūnya*), such as the hare of a horn, etc. Thus, it is possible to call ignorance beginning-less and real. But in Advaita, the meaning is not as it is in Nyāya, where ignorance is considered the negative version (*niṣedha-mukha*) of the object of apprehension, in the form of the absence of cognition. Instead, just as the snake in the rope, etc., are positive versions (*vidhi-mukha*) of objects of apprehension that are negated by cognition, in Advaita, ignorance is a positive object of apprehension that is to be negated (*nivartanīya*) by cognition. The *a-* prefix in *ajñāna* here does not imply negation, and so it is possible to speak of reality in ignorance. Further, the ancient (*prācīna*)⁴⁷² teachers, such as the author of the [*Pañcapādikā*]-*Vivaraṇa* and others have forcefully illustrated the fact that ignorance, which is opposed to illumination, is real, just as darkness, which is opposed to illumination, is real. Therefore,

⁴⁷¹ Specifically, *BS* 2.2.12-17.

⁴⁷² “Respected” might be a better translation for *prācīna* here.

those who hear that ignorance is real and become put-off (*utkarṣa*⁴⁷³), are not very learned (*alpa-śruta*). Ignorance is real. Being without origin, it is beginning-less, but it is not with parts like a pot which is comprised of parts (*avayava-samaveta*); instead, it has portions (*sāmśa*),⁴⁷⁴ like darkness (*VP* 8.5, 345-6).

7.4 The Nature of *Jīva* and *Īśvara*

Nīścaldās describes *Īśvara* as the reflection (*pratibimba*) of consciousness in the primordial matter (*mūla prakṛti*) based in pure consciousness. *Avidyā* is the portion of primordial matter qualified by the concealing power (*āvaraṇa-śakti*). The innumerable *jīvas* are the innumerable reflections of consciousness residing in the innumerable portions of ignorance. Nīścaldās describes the relation between *jīva* and *Īśvara* in four ways:

- 1) In the *Tattva-viveka*,⁴⁷⁵ the nature of *jīva* and *Īśvara* has been described as follows. Matter (*prakṛti*), the source of the creation (*jagat*), is conceived of in two forms: “*māyā cāvidyā ca svayam eva bhavati*, It [primordial matter, *mūla-prakṛti*] itself is both *māyā* and ignorance,” according to *śruti*.⁴⁷⁶ *Māyā* has pure *sattva*⁴⁷⁷ as its primary matter (*pradhāna*), and ignorance has impure *sattva* as its primary matter. *Sattva* that is overcome (*abhibhūta*) by *rajas* and *tamas guṇas* is called impure *sattva*, and that by which *rajas* and *tamas* are overcome is called pure *sattva*. The reflection [of consciousness] in *māyā* is called *Īśvara*; the reflection in ignorance is called *jīva*. The *upādhi* (“limiting adjunct”)⁴⁷⁸ of *Īśvara* is *māyā*, and *Īśvara* is omniscient as it is primordial matter (*pradhāna*) that is pure *sattva*. But because the *upādhi* of the *jīva* is primordial matter that is impure *sattva*, the *jīva* has limited knowledge (*alpa-jñā*).

⁴⁷³ Var. *utkarṇa* in Nīścaldās (1957, 483 n) and also Nīśchaladāsa (1868, 8.1). Ātmānand Muni explains it as “to raise one’s ears, i.e., to listen with surprise. *ūṁce kān karnā, arthāt āścarya ke sāth sunnā*.”

⁴⁷⁴ Nīścaldās is using *aṁśa* (portion) and *avayava* (part) in a specific, technical sense, even though both these terms are typically considered to be synonymous. An *avayava* is a part of measurable size which can be further subdivided, whereas *aṁśa* denotes a portion that is without size and indivisible. The precedent for such usage is *BS* 2.1.26, “[Brahman transforming into creation] results in the entire [transformation] or the violation of scripture on [Brahman’s] being without parts. *kṛtsna-prasaktir niravayavatva-śabda-kopo vā*,” and *BS* 2.3.45, “[The *jīva* is] a portion [of Brahman] due to the mention of diversity, and also otherwise [i.e., non-different]... *aṁśo nānā-vyapadeśād anyathā cāpi*” See also Nakamura (1983, 500-1)

⁴⁷⁵ Vidyāranya’s *Pañcadaśī*, Ch. 1.

⁴⁷⁶ *NṛUTU* 9 (Śaṅkarācārya and Vidyāranya 1896, 144).

⁴⁷⁷ *Sattva* (purity, light), *rajas* (activity, passion) and *tamas* (sloth, inertia, dullness) are the three qualities (*guṇa*) of matter (*prakṛti*). These are deliberately being left untranslated to leave it clear that these are references to the *guṇas*.

⁴⁷⁸ See discussion on meaning of *upādhi* on p. 164.

- 2) According to some authors,⁴⁷⁹ *prakṛti* is mentioned in the *śruti* to have two forms: it is called *māyā* because of the primacy of its power to project (*vikṣepa-śakti*), and it is called *avidyā*, ignorance, because of the primacy of its power to conceal (*āvaraṇa-śakti*). Since the *upādhi* of Īśvara, *māyā*, has no power to conceal, Īśvara as a reflection in *māyā* is not without knowledge (*ajñā*) [Īśvara is held to be all-knowing]; only *jīva* is without knowledge, because it is the reflection in ignorance which is possessed of concealing power.
- 3) According to the *Samkṣepa-sārīraka* [by Sarvajñātman], *śruti* has stated the *upādhi* of Īśvara to be the cause, and the *upādhi* of *jīva* to be the effect; therefore, the reflection in *māyā* is Īśvara, and the reflection in ignorance is *jīva*. In this context, the reflection may be called *jīva* or Īśvara, but the *jīva*-ness or Īśvara-ness is not warranted in only the reflection, but also in the consciousness qualified by the state of being a reflection (*pratibimbatva*). If the *jīva*-ness or Īśvara-ness were only in the reflection, then implication by renouncing a portion of the meaning (*bhāga-tyāga-lakṣaṇā*, see section 5.4.3, p. 132) would not be possible in the words *jīva* and Īśvara.
- 4) In reality, the highest truth (*paramārtha*) is that in all the positions stated so far there is the non-difference between the source (*bimba*) and its reflection. In this view, the reflection is not false (*mithyā*), but when the face located on the neck apprehends its reflection, although the apprehension is erroneous and the property of being a reflection is false, by nature the reflection is not false. This will be explained below [under the *Vivaraṇa* Theory of Reflection of Prakāśātman, section 7.4.2].

In all four of these views, since *jīva* and Īśvara have both been considered reflections, it is Brahman that is attained by liberated *jīvas*, and not Īśvara. When one *upādhi* is destroyed, the reflection of that *upādhi* does not become non-different from other reflections; instead, it only becomes non-different from its source [object] (*bimba*). And since Īśvara too is a reflection, it is not possible for the *jīva* to become identical with the Īśvara-reflection when the *jīva*'s *upādhi* in the form of a reflection is destroyed; it can only be identical with the

⁴⁷⁹ The most notable proponent of this view is Maṇḍana Miśra, 660-720 CE (Thrasher 1993, 70-1, 127-8).

source, pure Brahman (*VP* 8.6-7, 346-7). Thus, the above four views all accept a three-fold consciousness: 1) *jīva*; 2) *Īśvara*; and 3) pure Brahman.⁴⁸⁰

Having provided a brief overview of differing views of the relation between *jīva*, *Īśvara* and consciousness, Nīścaldās now takes a detailed look at four primary views by which the differentiation of consciousness as *jīva* and *Īśvara* is explained in the Advaita tradition:

1) Vidyāraṇya's Theory of Appearance (*ābhāsa-vāda*); 2) the *Vivaraṇa* Theory of Reflection (*bimba-pratibimba-vāda*) of Prakāśātman; 3) the Theory of Delimitation (*avaccheda-vāda*); and 4) the theory of there being only one *jīva* (*eka-jīva-vāda*, *dṛṣṭi-sṛṣṭi-vāda*).

7.4.1 Vidyāraṇya's Theory of Appearance (*Ābhāsa-vāda*)

In the *Citra-dīpa* [*prakaraṇa*],⁴⁸¹ Swāmī Vidyāraṇya mentions four types of consciousness, which are described by Nīścaldās thus: Space can be differentiated in four ways as: 1) pot-space (*ghaṭākāśa*), the pot-delimited space; 2) great-space (*mahākāśa*), undelimited (*niravacchinna*) space; 3) water-space (*jalākāśa*), the reflection of the sky in the water in the pot; and 4) cloud-space (*meghākāśa*), the reflection of the sky in the subtle droplets of the cloud-water. Consciousness has similarly been differentiated in four ways as: 1) *kūṭastha*, the substratum consciousness of the gross and subtle bodies; 2) Brahman, undelimited consciousness; 3) *jīva*, the reflection of consciousness in the water that is the intellect (*buddhi*) inside the pot that is the body; and 4) *Īśvara*, the reflection of consciousness in the latent tendencies of the intellect (*buddhi-vāsanā*), which are similar to the water droplets in the cloud that is *māyā*. The subtle state of the intellect (*buddhi*) in deep sleep (*suṣupti*) is called latent tendency (*vāsanā*). If the reflection of consciousness in only the *buddhi-vāsanās* were called *Īśvara*, then, since there are countless *buddhi-vāsanās*, there would also be countless *Īśvaras*. Instead, the reflection of consciousness in the ignorance qualified by the *buddhi-vāsanās* is called *Īśvara*. The sheath of intellect (*vijñānamaya-kośa*) is called the *jīva*; the gross *antaḥ-karaṇa* in the waking and dream states is called the intellect (*vijñāna*), and the reflection in it is said to consist of intellect (*vijñānamaya*). The one who possesses a particular intellect that maintains, "I am the doer, experiencer, fat, weak, cross-

⁴⁸⁰ In the *Vārtika*, six substances (*padārtha*) have been accepted as beginning-less: 1) pure consciousness (*śuddha cetana*) 2) *Īśvara*'s consciousness, 3) *jīva*'s consciousness, 4) ignorance, 5) the mutual relation (*sambandha*) between ignorance and consciousness, 6) the mutual difference among all these five. These six are devoid of creation and hence beginning-less (*anādī*), and the first three are the types of consciousness (*VP* 8.8, 348).

⁴⁸¹ *Pañcadaśī*, ch. 6, specifically *PD* 6.18.

eyed, deaf, etc.,” is the *jīva*. In the state of deep sleep, the sheath consisting of happiness (the *ānandamaya-kośa*), in the form of ignorance along with the *buddhi-vāsanās*, is *Īśvara*. The state of being *Īśvara* (*īśvaratā* = *Īśvara*-ness) in the *ānandamaya-kośa* is also well known in the *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad* (*MāU*).⁴⁸² In Vidyāraṇya’s theory, the reflection is false, but in the four views [of *jīva* and *Īśvara*] stated above, since the source and reflection are non-different, the reflection is also real. Because of the proximity (*sannidhāna*) of the *upādhi*, there is the erroneous cognition of reflection and source in the same object, yet in reality the reflection is only of the nature of the source. In Vidyāraṇya’s theory, by the proximity of the face as a source, the *anirvacanīya* reflection arises in the mirror, etc. Therefore, the *jīva* and *Īśvara* are false in nature (*VP* 8.9-10, 348-9).⁴⁸³

Nīścaldās explains Vidyāraṇya’s stance. According to [Vidyāraṇya’s] Theory of Appearance (*ābhāsa-vāda*),⁴⁸⁴ in the *mahā-vākya* statements that teach (*pratipādana*) the identity of *jīva* and Brahman, only negated grammatical co-ordination (*bādhā-samānādhikaraṇya*) is present, as opposed to identity coordination (*abheda-samānādhikaraṇya*). For example, where an erroneous cognition of a post as a person occurs and then the cognition of the post occurs, the non-difference of the person from the post is stated as “this person is a post.” The negation occurs as “the post has the absence of a person,” or “the absence of a person is a post.” In the view [lit. *mata*] that accepts absence as separate from the substratum (*adhikaraṇa*), the first version performs the negation; where the absence of the imagined is in the form of the substratum, it is the latter. Similarly, the statement “*Jīva* is Brahman” means “Brahman is that which has the absence of a *jīva*,” or “The absence of a *jīva* is Brahman.” Absence (*abhāva*) in all three times [past, present, and future] is called negation (*bādhā*). Where the identity of an imagined object with the real substratum is stated, negated coordination (*bādhā-samānādhikaraṇya*) alone is intended. Whereas, where the identity of the immutable (*kūṭastha*) with Brahman is stated, the identity-coordination (*abheda-samānādhikaraṇya*) alone is intended. For example, where the identity of space [reflected] in the water [of the pot] (*jalākāśa*) with the great space (*mahākāśa*) is

⁴⁸² This will be taken up shortly, in *VP* 8.18.

⁴⁸³ This will be clarified in the following discussion on *samānādhikaraṇya*, grammatical coordination (*VP* 8.11-14).

⁴⁸⁴ Vidyāraṇya cites Śaṅkara’s *Upadeśa-sāhasrī* as the source for his *ābhāsa-vāda*, in *PD* 8.12cd: “*brahma-cit-phalayoṛ bhedaḥ sāhasrīyām viśruto yataḥ*, since the difference between Brahman-consciousness and the resultant consciousness has been noted in the [*Upadeśa*] *Sāhasrī*.”

stated, the negated coordination of the water-space with great-space occurs only through the negation of the water. But where the identity of the pot-space with the great-space is stated, there identity-coordination alone takes place, and this is also called principal coordination (*mukhya-samānādhikaraṇya*) (VP 8.11-12, 349-50).

But in the *Vivaraṇa* text, in the [*mahā-vākya*] statement “*ahaṃ brahmāsmi*, I am Brahman,” the principal coordination of “I,” meaning *jīva*, with Brahman, is intended, and negated-coordination is refuted in all the *mahā-vākyas*. Vidyāraṇya, in the *Citra-dīpa* [*prakaraṇa*], justifies his stance while demonstrating agreement with the *Vivaraṇa* standpoint in the following manner. The appearance of consciousness (*cidābhāsa*) and the immutable (*kūṭastha*) are mutually superimposed (*anyonyādhyāsa*), because the substratum of the intellect (*buddhi*) qualified by *cidābhāsa* is the *kūṭastha*, and so the mutual superimposition of the substratum and the superimposed is natural. The object of the I-apprehension (*ahaṃ-pratīti*) is the intellect (*buddhi*) qualified by *cidābhāsa*, and the object of self-apprehension (*svayaṃ-pratīti*) is the *kūṭastha*. “I know myself,” “you know yourself,” “he/she knows himself/herself.” In all these apprehensions the meaning of the “self” word is subsequent (*anugata*), but the meaning of the words ‘I,’ ‘you,’ ‘he/she,’ is changing. Here the meaning of the word “self,” the *kūṭastha*, which is subsequent in every case, is the substratum, but the ‘I,’ ‘you,’ ‘he,’ words meaning *jīva* as the *cidābhāsa*-qualified intellect, which is changing, are the superimposed. There is the superimposition of the nature or identity (*svarūpādhyāsa*) of the *jīva* on *kūṭastha*, and relational superimposition (*sambandhādhyāsa*) of the *kūṭastha* on the *jīva*.⁴⁸⁵ Since there is mutual superimposition, *kūṭastha* and *jīva* do not discern (*viveka honā*) each other. Therefore, the principal coordination of the *kūṭastha* with Brahman operates (*vyavahāra*) in the *jīva*, because, without superimposing the properties (*dharma*) of the *kūṭastha* in the false *jīva*, the *jīva*’s principal coordination with Brahman is not possible. In this manner, *kūṭastha* is the substratum of the *antaḥ-karaṇa*, which is based in the *jīva* (*svāśraya*), and the principal coordination of *jīva* with Brahman is spoken of only with the intent to describe (*vivakṣā*) the properties of the *kūṭastha*. (VP 8.13, 350). But, according to Nīścaldās, if the *Vivaraṇa* text is considered thoroughly (lit. *pūrva-uttara*, before and after), the manner of agreement stated by Vidyāraṇya is not possible, since the reflection is

⁴⁸⁵ VP 7.8, 223-5, covered in Ch. 6.2 on Superimposition (*adhyāsa*).

considered to be of the nature of the source (*bimba*). Therefore, in the *Vivaraṇa*, although the state of being a *jīva* (*jīvatva*) as a reflection is false, the *jīva*'s nature (*svarūpa*) as a reflection is true, [i.e., the *jīva*'s true nature is that of the source], and thus the principal (grammatical) coordination (*mukhya-samānādhikaraṇya*) of the *jīva* with Brahman is possible. But the harmonizing intent (*samanvaya-kāraka abhiprāya*) of the *Vivaraṇa* that Vidyāraṇya posits is an extravagant assertion (*prauḍhi-vāda*).⁴⁸⁶ According to Vidyāraṇya, “even considering the reflection to be false, the principal coordination of the *Vivaraṇa* becomes possible by the *mahā-vākyas*' intent of the reflection being of the nature of *kūṭastha* (*kūṭasthatva*). Therefore, it is futile to accept the reflection as real simply for the purpose of principal coordination.” By this extravagant assertion, Vidyāraṇya has imposed (lit. *sūcita*, indicated) his opinion (*abhiprāya*) on the *Vivaraṇa* text (*VP* 8.14, 350-1). In essence (lit. *āśaya*, meaning/intention), the fact that principal coordination in the *mahā-vākyas* can be expounded, even considering the reflection as false, reveals Vidyāraṇya's over-reach (*utkarṣa*).

Nīścaldās suggests that Vidyāraṇya's intent behind the four types of consciousness in the *Citra-dīpa* is as follows. The appearance (*ābhāsa*) in the *antaḥ-karaṇa* is the *jīva*, and it is in the form of the sheath of intellect (*vijñānamaya kośa*). Also, the appearance in the ignorance qualified by [the collective] latent tendencies of the intellect (*buddhi-vāsanā*) is Īśvara, and it is in the form of the sheath consisting of happiness (*ānandamaya-kośa*). The nature (*svarūpa*) of both is false, i.e., on the one hand there is mutual superimposition of the *kūṭastha* and *jīva*, and, on the other hand, there is mutual superimposition of Brahman and Īśvara. In some places, *jīva* is said to be ultimate Brahman, by superimposing the properties of the *kūṭastha* on *jīva*, and in some places the presence of the attributes of being that which is to be known through Vedānta (*vedānta-vedyatva*), etc., in Īśvara is stated with the intent of expressing the Brahman-ness underlying the superimposition (*ādhyāsika brahmatva*). But Nīścaldās goes on to assert that what Vidyāraṇya has stated above, namely, the reflection in the latent tendencies of the intellect is Īśvara, or the sheath consisting of happiness (*ānandamaya-kośa*) is Īśvara, is not possible. Those who consider Īśvara in the ignorance qualified by latent tendencies of the intellect should be asked: 1) is the *upādhi* of the state of being Īśvara

⁴⁸⁶ In *VP* 6.35, 191, Nīścaldās defines *prauḍhi-vāda* as “the (temporary) acceptance of the opponents' view while refuting their objections in one's own view, *prativādī kī uktī mānikai bhī svamata meṃ doṣa kā parihāra karai tākūṃ prauḍhi-vāda kahai haiṃ*.” Here he defines it as “that which is asserted extravagantly. *prauḍhi kahiye utkarṣa saṃ jo vāda kahiye kathana, tākū prauḍhi-vāda kahaiṃ haiṃ*” (*VP* 8.14, 351).

(*īśvara-bhāva*) only ignorance; or, 2) is it [the *upādhi*] ignorance accompanied by latent tendencies; or, 3) is it latent tendencies alone? The first option would contradict the reflection in ignorance qualified by latent tendencies of the intellect as *īśvara*. According to the second option, then only ignorance should be considered the *upādhi* of *īśvara*-ness; it is fruitless to consider ignorance accompanied by latent tendencies of the intellect as the *upādhi* of *īśvara*-ness. A follower of Vidyāraṇya might say, “if only ignorance be considered the *upādhi* of *īśvara*-ness, then the omniscience of *īśvara* would not be established, and therefore, for this purpose, the latent tendencies of the intellect have also been accepted as an attribute of ignorance.” Such a statement is improper as well, because the apprehension (*lābha*, lit. gain) of omniscience is only possible by the *vṛtti* pertaining to the *sattva*-portion present in ignorance, and, in that case, it is fruitless to consider the latent tendencies of the intellect as an attribute of ignorance. Instead, one should claim that [the apprehension of] omniscience is only possible through the *sattva* portion of ignorance; omniscience is simply not established by the latent tendencies of the intellect. It is impossible for each latent tendency of the intellect to pertain to all objects (*nikhila-padārtha-gocaratā*); therefore, in order to apprehend omniscience, one will have to consider all latent tendencies as attributes of ignorance, although the existence of all latent tendencies at one instant is not possible except at the time of the dissolution [of the creation]. Therefore, one must accept that omniscience is just not established by latent tendencies (*vāsanā*). Thus the second option, “ignorance accompanied by latent tendencies of the intellect is the *upādhi* of *īśvara*-ness,” is not possible either. According to the third option, that “latent tendency alone is the *upādhi* of *īśvara*-ness,” the question arises whether 3a) each reflection in each latent tendency is *īśvara*; or 3b) the one reflection in all the collective latent tendencies is *īśvara*. If it is (3a), since every *jīva* has endless latent tendencies, the *īśvaras* as reflections in them will also be endless, and since each latent tendency only pertains to a finite entity (*alpa-gocara*), the endless, reflected *īśvaras* in them will be of finite knowledge as well. If it is (3b), then all the latent tendencies cannot be simultaneously present (*yugapat*) except at the dissolution of creation (*pralaya*). Moreover, the reflections in multiple *upādhis* can, likewise, only be multiple, and therefore, only one reflection in all latent tendencies is not possible. These considerations show that only ignorance can be the *upādhi* of *īśvara*-ness, and so Vidyāraṇya’s usage of latent tendency in *Citra-dīpa* is futile (*VP* 8.15-16, 351-2).

Similarly, Nīścaldās writes that it is improper to attribute Īśvara-ness to the sheath consisting of happiness (*ānandamaya-kośa*), because, in the waking and dreaming states, the *antaḥ-karaṇa* alone, qualified by the gross states along with the reflection, is described as consisting of intellect (*vijñānamaya*), and in the deep sleep state, that *jīva* consisting of intellect itself, devoid of even the subtle form (*līna huā*), is considered to be consisting of happiness (*ānandamaya*). If the sheath consisting of happiness alone were considered Īśvara, when there is absence of the [sheath] of happiness (*ānandamaya [kośa]*) of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* in the waking and dreaming states, in those states there should be absence of Īśvara too, and there should also be countless Īśvaras of endless *jīvas* in countless states of deep sleep. Moreover, all authors have accepted the five sheaths (*kośa*), including Vidyāraṇya himself in his *Pañcakośa-viveka*.⁴⁸⁷ If only the sheath of happiness (*ānandamaya-kośa*) were considered Īśvara, then all those writings would be improper, and thus, it is not possible to have Īśvara-ness in the sheath of happiness (*VP* 8.17, 352-3).

Returning to Vidyāraṇya's statement that *MāU*⁴⁸⁸ supports the presence of Īśvara-ness in the sheath consisting of happiness (the *ānandamaya-kośa*), Nīścaldās suggests that although the sheath consisting of happiness has been stated to be omniscient and the Īśvara of all in *MāU*, this does not establish the Īśvara-ness of the sheath consisting of happiness. Instead, the meaning of the *MāU* statements is that the *jīva* has three natures, *viśva*, *taijasa* and *prājñā*, and Īśvara has the three natures: *virāṭ*, *hiranyagarbha* and *avyākṛta*.⁴⁸⁹ The presence of *jīva* (*jīva-rūpatā*) in *hiranyagarbha* is well known in all the Upaniṣads, and the meditation (*upāsanā*) for the attainment of the form of *hiranyagarbha* is also well known, as well as the attainment of the status of *hiranyagarbha* in another time period (*kalpa*) by the *jīva* who performs the meditation. Similarly, the *jīva* who performs the meditation for the attainment of *virāṭ* nature also attains it in another *kalpa*. The power (*aiśvarya*) of *virāṭ* is less than that of *hiranyagarbha*, and the power of Īśvara is the greatest of all. *Virāṭ* is the son of

⁴⁸⁷ *Pañcadaśī*, Ch. 3

⁴⁸⁸ This refers to *MāU* 5-6, "The third quarter is *prājñā*, where, asleep, one neither desires nor dreams of anything. That is deep sleep. In the state of deep sleep, becoming one, a mass of consciousness consisting of happiness (*ānandamaya*), one enjoys happiness, with consciousness as one's face. This is the Īśvara of all, the omniscient, the inner controller, the womb of all, the origin and dissolution of beings. *yatra supto na kañcana kāmam kāmāyate na kañcana svapnam paśyati tatsusuptam; suṣupta-sthāna ekībhūtaḥ prajñānaghana evānandamayo hy ānandabhuk-cetomukhaḥ prajñān trītyaḥ pādah. eṣa sarveśvara eṣa sarvajña eṣo 'ntaryāmi eṣa yoniḥ sarvasya prabhavāpyayau hi bhūtānām.*"

⁴⁸⁹ The terms *viśva*, *taijasa* and *prājñā* refer to the form of the *jīva* in the waking, dream, and deep sleep states respectively, and *virāṭ*, *hiranyagarbha* and *avyākṛta* are the corresponding states of the macrocosm in those three states. These terms, most being proper nouns, are not being translated here.

hiranyagarbha, and has the limitation of hunger and thirst.⁴⁹⁰ It is not possible to consider Īśvara-ness in *hiranyagarbha* and *virāt*; instead, the *jīva* who resides in *satya-loka* [or *brahma-loka*, the highest of the seven upper worlds, BU 6.2.15], who lays claim to collective subtle-ness (*sūkṣma-samaṣṭi kā abhimānī*), and is the experiencer of pleasure, is named *hiranyagarbha*, and the *jīva* who lays claim to collective matter (*sthūla*) is named *virāt*. Along with this, the meaning of the word *hiranyagarbha* is the dispatcher (*preraka*) of the subtle creation (*sūkṣma prapañca*) in the form of the inner regulator (*antaryāmī*), and the meaning of the word *virāt* is the dispatcher of the material creation as the inner regulator. Further, the unmanifest (*avyākṛta*), in the form of ignorance contained in the reflection of consciousness alone, is that Īśvara called *hiranyagarbha* when it is the dispatcher of the subtle in the time of its creation, and when it is the dispatcher of matter (*sthūla*) in the time of its creation, then it is that Īśvara called *virāt*. Thus, there is agency (*pravṛtti*) of the words *hiranyagarbha* and *virāt* in the states of being *jīva* and Īśvara. In the *jīva*, which is claimed to be the subtle and the material, the words have a direct significatory relation (*śakti-vṛtti*); in Īśvara which is claimed to be the dispatcher of the subtle and material creation, the words have a subsidiary significatory relation (*gauṇī-vṛtti*). This is because, just as *hiranyagarbha* and *virāt* in the form of *jīva* have an identity relation (*svīyatā-sambandha*) with the subtle and material creation, similarly *hiranyagarbha* and *virāt* as Īśvara have a dispatcher (*preriyatā*) relation with the subtle and material creation. Therefore, the word *hiranyagarbha* has a subsidiary significatory relation (*gauṇī-vṛtti*) to Īśvara by the connection (*yoga*) of the quality (*guṇa*) of relationship (*sambandhitva*) to subtle creation residing in *hiranyagarbha*, and the word *virāt* has a subsidiary significatory relation to Īśvara by connection of the quality (*guṇa*) of relationship to subtle creation residing in *virāt*. In this manner, the words *hiranyagarbha* and *virāt* each have both senses, *jīva* and Īśvara, and one should take the sense that is reasonable in each context. But those who read Vedānta texts without the benefit of a teacher (*guru*) and tradition (*sampradāya*) do not have knowledge of the usage (*vyavasāya*) as stated above, and so they become deluded by the fact that the words

⁴⁹⁰ Nīścaldās says that “this verse [attesting to Virāt being the son of Hiranyagarbha and subject to hunger and thirst] is also well known in the *purāṇas*. *yah gāthā purāṇa maiṃ prasiddha hai*” (VP 8.18, 353). The relation of Hiranyagarbha and Virāt is attested to in *RV* 10.90.5a, “*tasmād virāḥ ajāyata*, From [cosmic Puruṣa] was born Virāt.” Also in *BU* 2.6.3 on the lineage: “*parmeṣṭhī brahmaṇaḥ*, Parameṣṭhin from Brahman,” where Śaṅkara glosses Parameṣṭhin as Virāt and Brahman as Hiranyagarbha. I have been unable to locate the *purāṇa* reference to Virāt being subject to hunger and thirst.

hiranyagarbha and *virāt* are used as *jīva* in some places and *Īśvara* in others. In *MāU*, the manner of contemplation of the identity between the three-fold *jīva* and the three-fold *Īśvara* is also given. Its intent is also the same. For the person of weak intellect (*manda-buddhi*) who cannot realize truth through the contemplation of the *mahā-vākyas*, the method of contemplation on Om (*praṇava*) is provided.⁴⁹¹ That contemplation focuses on the identity between *viśva-virāt*, *taijasa-hiranyagarbha* and *prājña-īśvara*, and the qualities of *Īśvara* such as omniscience, etc., in the sheath consisting of happiness (*ānandamaya*) as *prājña* are mentioned only for the contemplation of identity, and not to signify *Īśvara*-ness in the sheath consisting of happiness. Nīscaldās concludes that the *Īśvara*-ness of the sheath consisting of happiness is not established by the *MāU* (*VP* 8.18, 353-5).

Here, Nīscaldās is not criticizing Vidyāraṇya specifically but rather, he is finding fault with the misunderstanding of Vidyāraṇya's teachings. Nīscaldās points out that in the *Brahmānanda* text,⁴⁹² Vidyāraṇya speaks of that [sheath (*kośa*)] which consists of happiness (*ānandamaya*) as a particular state of the *jīva*. In the waking and dream states, the compact form (*ghanī-bhāva*) of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* is called that [sheath] which consists of the intellect (*viññānamaya*) because of the *karmas* causing experience (*bhoga*) [in those two states], and the same *viññānamaya* in the state of deep sleep is called *ānandamaya* [sheath] of the absorbed (*vilīna*) state by its relation with the *upādhi* in the form of [this] *antaḥ-karaṇa*.⁴⁹³ Thus, even Vidyāraṇya would prefer that the *ānandamaya* [sheath] is a particular state of the *viññānamaya*, and that the *jīva*-hood (*jīva-bhāva*) itself be in the *ānandamaya-kośa*. Nīscaldās suggests that, although it might be traditionally understood from the different writings in the *Pañcadaśī* that the five *viveka* and five *dīpa* chapters⁴⁹⁴ are written by Vidyāraṇya and the five *ānanda* chapters⁴⁹⁵ by Bhāratīrtha,⁴⁹⁶ it is not possible to have contradictions between the former and latter portions of the same text. As a result, even the *Pañcadaśī* does not teach (*vivakṣita*) *Īśvara*-ness in the *ānandamaya*, and the *Īśvara*-ness

⁴⁹¹ Meditation (*upāsana*) of Om (*praṇava*) is described in detail by Nīscaldās in *VS* 5.281-303.

⁴⁹² *Pañcadaśī* chs. 11-15.

⁴⁹³ Compare *PD* 11.62-3: *yad ajñānam tatra līnau tau viññāna-manomayau; tayoḥ hi vilayāvasthā nidrā'jñānam ca saiva hi*. The ignorance is latent in the intellect and mind [sheaths, *viññānamaya* and *manomaya*]; deep sleep is the state of latency and also of ignorance. *vilīna-ghṛtavat paścāt syād viññānamayo ghanāḥ; vilīnāvasthā ānandamaya-śabdena kathyate*. As melted ghee later solidifies, [similarly] the intellect [and mind sheaths are manifest after deep sleep]; the state of latency [for the mind and intellect sheaths] is termed the happiness sheath (*ānandamaya*).

⁴⁹⁴ *Pañcadaśī* chs. 1-10.

⁴⁹⁵ *Pañcadaśī* chs. 11-15.

⁴⁹⁶ For a discussion of the authorship of the *Pañcadaśī*, see Pahlajrai (2005, 23-36)

mentioned in the *Citra-dīpa* chapter by Vidyāraṇya is for the purpose of contemplation of identity with Īśvara alone, just like in the *MāU* (VP 8.19, 355).

Further, Nīścaldās suggests that although Vidyāraṇya enumerated four types of consciousness in the *Citra-dīpa* chapter of Pañcadaśī, in the *Dṛg-dṛśya-viveka* text,⁴⁹⁷ he has included the immutable (*kūṭastha*) in the *jīva*, and has provided three types of *jīvas*: 1) ultimate (*pāramārthika*); 2) empirical (*vyāvahārika*); and 3) apparent (*prātibhāsika*).⁴⁹⁸ The *kūṭastha* consciousness delimited by the material and subtle bodies (*sthūla-sūkṣma-deha-dvayāvacchinna*)⁴⁹⁹ is the ultimate *jīva* (1), and it has principal identity with Brahman. The appearance of consciousness (*cidābhāsa*) is in the *antaḥ-karaṇa*, conceived of (*kalpita*) in the *kūṭastha* concealed by *māyā*. The conceiver of the ego-self (*abhimāna-kartā*) in the material and subtle bodies is the empirical *jīva* (2). It is not negated (*bādha*) prior to knowledge of Brahman (*brahma-jñāna*). The apparent *jīva* (3) is concealed by ignorance in the form of sleep and is conceived on the substratum of the empirical *jīva* (2), i.e., it is the one who conceives of “I” and “mine” in the apparent creation in the dream state. When the apparent creation is negated (*nivṛtti*) upon the knowledge of the creation in the waking state, even without knowledge of Brahman, then by the awareness of the empirical *jīva* (2), the cessation of the apparent *jīva* (3) occurs. In this manner, *kūṭastha* is included in the *jīva*, and consciousness is of three kinds: *jīva*, Īśvara and pure consciousness (*śuddha-cetana*). This view is agreed to by all and is in concord with the *Vārtika* (VP 8.20, 355-6).

7.4.2 The *Vivaraṇa* Theory of Reflection (*Bimba-pratibimba-vāda*) of Prakāśātman

Next, Nīścaldās takes up the *Vivaraṇa* Theory of Reflection for a closer examination in order to harmonize a seeming inconsistency. According to the four views on the nature of *jīva* and Īśvara, enumerated above (in section 7.4, p. 237), in the state of liberation, the *jīva* has identity with pure Brahman, but according to the *Vivaraṇa* view, the *jīva* has identity

⁴⁹⁷ Nīścaldās is assuming that both the *Pañcadaśī* and the *Dṛg-dṛśya-viveka* were written by Vidyāraṇya. For a brief discussion of the possible authorship of the latter by Bhāratīrtha, see Pahlajrai (2005, 34).

⁴⁹⁸ *Dṛg-dṛśya-viveka* v. 32: “*avacchinnaś cidābhāsaḥ tṛtīyaḥ svapna-kalpitaḥ; vijñeyas tri-vidho jīvas tatrādyah pāramārthikaḥ*. The *jīva* should be known to be of three kinds: first is the ultimate (*pāramārthika*), [the second is] delimited appearance of consciousness, the third as imagined in a dream.”

⁴⁹⁹ The KS ed. reads *sthūla- sūkṣma-bheda-dvayāvacchinna* (VP 8.20, 355). I have followed the text as per Nīścaldās (1868, 8.5). *Tattvabodha*, an Advaita primer states: *sthūla-sūkṣma-kāraṇa-śarīrād vyatiriktaḥ ... sac-cid-ānanda-svarūpaḥ san yastiṣṭhati sa ātmā*. The *ātmā* is that which abides apart from the material, subtle and causal bodies ... and is of the nature of existence, consciousness and happiness (Vasudevendramuni 2011, 2, v. 2). The *kāraṇa-śarīra* (causal body), the cause of the *sthūla-* and *sūkṣma-śarīras*, is ignorance (3, v. 3.3).

with Īśvara. Since, according to all four views, Īśvara too, just like the *jīva*, is only a reflection, the *jīva* does not have identity with Īśvara in the state of liberation. When the *upādhi* goes away (*apasaraṇa*), the identity of one reflection with other reflections is not experienced; instead, the identity of the reflection with the source alone is known by experience. Similarly, in the state of liberation, the *jīva* reflection gains identity with pure consciousness alone. But, in the view of the author of the *Vivaraṇa* [i.e., *Prakāśātman*], Īśvara is the source-consciousness (*bimba-cetana*); therefore, [on liberation] the *jīva* does become identical to Īśvara (*VP* 8.21, 356).

In the view of the author of the *Vivaraṇa*, the same ignorance is the *upādhi* of both *jīva* and Īśvara. The *jīva* is the reflection in ignorance, and Īśvara is its source. Where the reflection of the face is visible in a mirror, there is neither the shadow of the face in the mirror, nor the arising of an *anirvacanīya* reflection, nor the arising of an empirical reflection. Instead, the *vṛtti* of the eye in the realm of the mirror, reflecting off the mirror, takes as its object its own face situated on the neck (*grīvā-stha-mukha*). Thus, the face on the neck itself is apprehended as source and reflection, and the face on the neck alone is real. Similarly, since the essence (*svarūpa*, lit. ‘own form’) of the source and reflection is the face on the neck alone, the essence of the source and the reflection is real, but the properties (*dharma*) of being source or reflection (*bimbatva-pratibimbatva*) are false for the face on the neck. The face is the substratum of the *anirvacanīya* false states of being source or reflection. According to this example, like the source, the essence of the reflection is also real and of the form of the source, due to the proximity of the ignorance located in the mirror. Similarly, because of the Īśvara located as the source in pure consciousness, the essence of the *jīva* located in the reflection is also pure consciousness alone. Although principal grammatical coordination (*mukhya-samānādhikarṇya*) is possible in the *mahā-vākyas*, the properties of both Īśvara-ness as the state of being the source and *jīva*-ness as the state of being a reflection are false, and their substratum is pure consciousness alone. Further, since the *upādhi* of *jīva* and Īśvara is the one and the same ignorance, both *jīva* and Īśvara should be either ignorant or omniscient. However, just as the superposition of the attributes of smallness, yellowness, etc., of the mirror as the *upādhi* occur only in the reflection and not in the source, similarly the concealing nature (*āvaraṇa-svabhāva*) and the limitedness of knowledge (*alpa-jñātā*) caused by ignorance reside in the *jīva*-reflection alone, and, due to

Īśvara's self-luminosity (*svarūpa-prakāśa*), only omniscience resides in Īśvara. In this way, when there is the identity of the source and reflection, it is not possible to speak of the differences of their properties. However, the fact that the face on the neck is located in the mirror and [the face's] being a reflection is only an erroneous cognition (*bhrama*). The erroneously established state of being a reflection empirically requires the face on the neck to have the state of being the source. Just as both properties, the states of being the source and the reflection, are superimposed on one and the same face, similarly the difference as source and reflection is also superimposed on the property-possessor (*dharmin*). The erroneous apprehension of difference between the source and reflection makes possible the arrangement [of Īśvara as the omniscient source and *jīva* as a reflection with limited knowledge]. In this manner, according to the *Vivaraṇa*'s author, *jīva* is the reflection in ignorance, and Īśvara is the source. Ignorance is *anirvacanīya*, even when it exists, and, from the ultimate standpoint (*paramārtha*), ignorance does not exist. Thus, since consciousness in the form of source and reflection is ultimately pure consciousness alone, the attainment of Īśvara-hood (*īśvara-bhāva*) is also just the attainment of pure consciousness (*VP* 8.22, 356-7).

7.4.3 The Theory of Delimitation (*Avaccheda-vāda*)

Some teachers (*ācārya*) [proponents of the Theory of Delimitation (*avaccheda-vāda*)]⁵⁰⁰ raise an objection against the *Vivaraṇa* Theory of Reflection. They claim that the reflection of formless (*nirūpa*) consciousness in the *Vivaraṇa* view is not possible; instead, consciousness delimited (*avacchinna*) by the *antaḥ-karaṇa* is the *jīva*, and consciousness non-delimited (*anavacchinna*) by the *antaḥ-karaṇa* is Īśvara. The sky (*ākāśa*) is apprehended as blue and vast when reflected in the water within a pool or well, despite the absence of blueness or vastness. Therefore, according to the apprehension, the sky, qualified by blueness superimposed on it and by vastness, should be considered a reflection, regardless of the fact that the sky does not actually have color. Although the reflection of the formless sky may be somehow possible, the sky is known to have the blue color superimposed on it through error (*bhrānti*). Only substances possessing color/form (*rūpa*), whether superimposed or not, can have reflections. But the reflection of consciousness is not possible by any means, because of

⁵⁰⁰ The proponents of the Theory of Delimitation (*avaccheda-vāda*) include Vācaspati Miśra, the “founder” of the Bhāmāṭī school.

the absence of even superimposed color/form in consciousness. It is also improper to call an echo of formless sound in formless sky a reflection, because, if this were to be accepted, then, since a reflection is not possible in a formless *upādhi*, the sky would not remain formless.

Further, the echo that occurs in space/sky cannot be called the reflection of sound because, if an echo is accepted as a reflection of sound, then the absence of sound in the space will occur. The reality (*vāstavikatā*) of an echo can be explained as follows. By the contact of a stick with a drum, the first earthly (*pārthiva*) sound is produced, and then in the location facing that earthly sound, the echo sound is produced in the space delimited by stone, etc. This sound is not a reflection. The earthly sound is the efficient cause (*nimitta-kāraṇa*) of the echo sound, and that is why the echo is similar to the original sound. Now, if the echo is accepted as a reflection of the earthly sound, in Vidyāraṇya's view, the reflection is considered to be *anirvacanīya*, and, in the *Vivaraṇa* view the reflection is considered to be of the nature of the source. Then, according to both of these views, the echo will not remain an attribute (*guṇa*) of space. According to the *anirvacanīya* reflection view, if the echo is considered to be an *anirvacanīya* reflection of the earthly sound, the attribute of empirical (*vyāvahārika*) space cannot be apparent (*prātibhāsika*); therefore, the echo will no longer be an attribute of space. According to the *Vivaraṇa* view of the identity of source and reflection, since the echo is a reflection of the earthly sound, and identical to its source, that echo will remain an attribute of earth alone. Further, earth, water, fire and wind have separate sounds, but space has no other type of sound apart from an echo. On accepting an echo to be a reflection, then the space will be left without sound, and no *śāstra* accepts this. Vidyāraṇya, in his [*Mahā*] *bhūta-viveka*,⁵⁰¹ states that the earth makes the sound *kaṭa-kaṭa*,⁵⁰² the water *cula-cula*,⁵⁰³ fire *bhuka-bhuka*,⁵⁰⁴ wind, *sīsī*,⁵⁰⁵ and space, an echo. Similarly, other authors also claim that echo is an attribute of space; therefore, an echo cannot be the reflection of sound; instead, the echo independently is the sound-attribute of space, its material cause is

⁵⁰¹ *Pañcadaśī* Ch. 2.

⁵⁰² *PD* 2.5: *kaṭa-kaṭā*, a rattling sound, per Swami Swahananda's tr. (Vidyāraṇya and Swahananda 1967, 33).

⁵⁰³ *PD* 2.4: *bulu-bulu*, rippling.

⁵⁰⁴ *PD* 2.3: *bhugu-bhugu*, crackling.

⁵⁰⁵ *PD* 2.3: *bīsī*, rustling

space, and the earthly sound that occurs in a drum, etc., is the efficient cause of that echo. This establishes the fact that a formless reflection is not possible.

A proponent of Theory of Reflection may respond as follows. “The space in a well, etc., is apprehended as ‘vast space,’ but there is no vastness in the well’s space. Therefore, one will have to accept that the external, formless vast space alone is reflected in the well-water. The reflection of formless consciousness is similarly possible.” Even if this were to be accepted somehow, still, the reflection can only be possible in an *upādhi* with form, so how can a reflection be possible in a formless *upādhi*? Here, the well-water is the *upādhi* of the reflection of space, and it has form. But ignorance, the *antaḥ-karaṇa*, etc., are formless, so how can the reflection of formless consciousness be possible in them? Therefore, it will have to be accepted that consciousness delimited by the *antaḥ-karaṇa* is the *jīva*, and consciousness non-delimited by the *antaḥ-karaṇa* is *Īśvara*. Or, consciousness delimited by *avidyā*, ignorance, is the *jīva*, and consciousness delimited by *māyā* is *Īśvara* (VP 8.23,357-9). This theory is known as the Theory of Delimitation (*avaccheda-vāda*).

Nīścaldās refutes the *antaḥ-karaṇa* delimitation aspect of this theory. If consciousness delimited by the *antaḥ-karaṇa* is accepted as *jīva*, and non-delimited, as *Īśvara*, then *Īśvara*-ness will only occur in the consciousness located outside of the universe (*brahmāṇḍa*), since there are endless pervaded (*vyāpta*) *antaḥ-karaṇas* of endless *jīvas* in the universe, and therefore, it will not be possible to obtain consciousness non-delimited by the *antaḥ-karaṇa* within the *brahmāṇḍa*. If the existence of *Īśvara* is accepted only outside the universe, the statements of *śruti* propounding the inner controller (*antaryāmī*) will be contradicted, such as “*yo vijñāne tiṣṭhan [...] vijñānam antaro yamayati*, that which, residing within the intellect [...], controls it from within” (BU 3.7.22). In this statement, the existence of *Īśvara* is affirmed to be located in the *jīva*, which is indicated by the term intellect (*vijñāna*). Therefore, it should be accepted that *Īśvara* is not “consciousness non-delimited by *antaḥ-karaṇa*” but instead is “consciousness delimited by *māyā*.” If consciousness non-delimited by *antaḥ-karaṇa* is considered *Īśvara*, then only the absence of a relation with the *antaḥ-karaṇa* is established as the *upādhi* of *Īśvara*-ness. But, omniscience, etc., in *Īśvara* are caused by the *upādhi*, and an *upādhi* in the form of absence does not establish properties (*dharma*) such as

⁵⁰⁶ The intervening words (“*vijñānād antaro yaṃ vijñānam na veda yasya vijñānam śarīram yo*” are omitted by Nīścaldās. Unclear if this is intentional or if he is citing a variant version or an altogether different source.

omniscience, etc. (*VP* 8.25, 359-60). Vidyāraṇya states in the *Tr̥pti-dīpa*⁵⁰⁷ that, just as the relation of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* is an *upādhi*, similarly the absence of the relation of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* is also an *upādhi*. Just as an iron chain restrains wandering, so does a gold chain.⁵⁰⁸ Likewise, the *jīva*-nature is known by the existent *upādhi* of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* as a relation, and the Īśvara-nature (*paramātmā-svarūpa*) is known by the absence of the same relation. Thus, even the absence (*rāhitya*) of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* is an *upādhi* for Vidyāraṇya. His intent is that just as the knowledge of the *jīva*'s nature is known by its relation with the *antaḥ-karaṇa*, similarly the knowledge of the nature of Brahman occurs by means of the absence of *antaḥ-karaṇa*. Thus, even according to Vidyāraṇya's works, omniscience, etc., are not established in Īśvara by an *upādhi* in the form of absence (*VP* 8.26, 360). Only consciousness delimited by *māyā* is Īśvara, and, because *māyā* is all-pervasive, it is possible for Īśvara to be the inner controller (*antaryāmi*) as well. If we accept consciousness delimited by the *antaḥ-karaṇa* as the *jīva*, then consciousness as doer and enjoyer will have different locations, and consequently the [logical] defects of destruction of the achieved (*kṛta kā nāśa*) and attainment of the unachieved (*akṛta kī prāpti*) will arise.⁵⁰⁹ Therefore, consciousness delimited by ignorance alone is the *jīva*, and not consciousness delimited by the *antaḥ-karaṇa*. Many authors thus accept the Theory of Delimitation (*avaccheda-vāda*) alone, and their texts clearly present the remedy (*parihāra*) to the [seeming] contradiction by the *śruti* and *smṛti* texts that propound the Theory of Reflection (*VP* 8.27, 360-1).

7.4.4 The Theory of There Being Only One *Jīva* (*Eka-jīva-vāda*, *Dr̥ṣṭi-sr̥ṣṭi-vāda*)

The primary exponent of this theory is Prakāśānanda in his *Vedānta-siddhānta-muktāvalī*. Nīścaldās sums up this view with a verse (*dohā*):⁵¹⁰

*jyūṃ avikṛta kaumṭeya meṃ rādhā-putra pratīti;
cidānanda-ghana brahma meṃ jīva-bhāva tihim rīti.*

⁵⁰⁷ *PD* 7.

⁵⁰⁸ *PD* 7.86: *yathā vidhir upādhiḥ syāt pratiṣedhas tathā na kim, suvarṇa-loha-bhedena śṛṅkhalātvam na bhidyate*. Just as something positive can be an *upādhi*, why not something negative? The property of being a chain is not lost on account of the difference [of the chain being made] of iron or gold.

⁵⁰⁹ The essence is that, in the deep sleep state, there is always the absence of *antaḥ-karaṇa*, and from the standpoint of *siddhānta*, a different *antaḥ-karaṇa* arises in the waking state. Therefore, it will not be possible to attain the enjoyment in the same location of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* where *karma* was achieved, and therefore, the defects of destruction of the achieved and attainment of the unachieved arise.

⁵¹⁰ This is one of the only three *dohās* occurring in *VP*. The other two occur at *VP* 1.1 and *VP* 7.39.

Just as the son of Rādhā [i.e., Karṇa] is perceived in the unchanged son of Kuntī,
The existence of *jīva* is similarly perceived in Brahman, the mass of consciousness
and happiness.

According to this view, it is not possible for the ever unattached, eternally liberated Brahman that is consciousness and happiness to be a reflection of, or to be delimited by, ignorance, etc. Reflection (*pratibimbitatā*) or delimitation (*avacchinna*) is not possible in the space filled with water from a mirage in a pot made with a stick created from the horn of a hare by a potter who is the son of a barren woman; it is only possible in space in a pot filled with water of the same reality (*samāna-sattā*) as the space. Similarly, ignorance and its effects are not of the same reality as Brahman-consciousness; rather, they are devoid of their own reality (*svasattā-sūnya*) and they appear as though possessing reality (*sattā*) only due to the reality of Brahman. Therefore, it is not at all possible to speak of any relation between the extremely untrue (*alīka*) ignorance, etc., like the horn of a hare, etc., with consciousness, and the relation of consciousness to a reflection, etc. is even more remote. Therefore, Brahman is ever unchanging (*ekarasa*), and it is not possible for a *jīva* to occur as a reflection or delimitation in it. But the non-existent *jīva*, etc., are apprehended in Brahman by an imagined relation of an imagined ignorance, without actually being present there [in Brahman]. Just as Rādhā's son [Karṇa] had been erroneously apprehended in the unchanged (*avikārī*) son of Kuntī,⁵¹¹ similarly there is only erroneous cognition of the *jīva* as a reflection, etc. in the changeless Brahman, without any modification as a reflection, etc. The attainment of any *jīva*-reality (*bhāva*) as a reflection or delimitation does not actually occur. Brahman alone, attaining *jīva*-hood due to its own ignorance, becomes the conceiver (*kalpaka*) of the creation (*prapañca*). Īśvara too, endowed with omniscience and the other attributes, is conceived by the *jīva* itself, according to this view. Just as in a dream, the service of the king conceived of in the dream attains a result (*phala*), similarly, attainment of a result is also possible by the devotion (*bhajana*) to an Īśvara conceived in the dream that is ignorance. Thus, there occurs the erroneous cognition of *jīva*-hood due to the strength of the beginning-less ignorance and the concealing of one's own Brahman-nature. The immediate cognition of the truth produced by the *mahā-vākyas*, such as “*tat tvam asi*, You are that,” etc., removes the erroneous

⁵¹¹ In the *MBh*, Karṇa is the son given to Kuntī (who would later become the mother of the Pāṇḍava brothers) by the sun god, Sūrya. As Kuntī was unmarried at the time, she gave up the baby, setting him adrift in a basket on a river. He was discovered by a childless charioteer, Adhiratha, and his wife, Rādhā, and came to be known as Rādheya, son of Rādhā.

cognition of *jīva*-hood. Even at the time of erroneous cognition, there is no *jīva*-hood; instead, there is only the unchanged (*jyūṁ-kā-tyūṁ*), ever-liberated Brahman whose nature is consciousness and happiness. According to Nīścaldās, Śaṅkara (*bhāṣyakāra*) and Sureśvara (*vārtikakāra*) have propounded this very view in the commentary to the *BU* by the example of Karṇa.⁵¹² Kuntī's son, Karṇa, who suffered from the delusion that he was inferior (*nikṛṣṭa*) due to his relation with a low caste, kept on experiencing endless kinds of sorrow born of disgrace (*tiraskāra*). One day the sun god Sūrya⁵¹³ told him in private, "you are not Rādhā's son, you are born out of my relation with Kuntī." Due to these words of the sun god, Karṇa abandoned the delusion of himself as a low-caste and attained the self-evident glory effected by (*nimittaka*) being Kuntī's son. Similarly Brahman, which consists of consciousness and happiness (*cidānanda*), has attained the delusion of *jīva*-hood and has forgotten its own self-evident Brahman-nature because of its relation with beginning-less ignorance, and it is thereby experiencing endless kinds of sorrow as a result. At some time, in a dream conceived by its ignorance, if Brahman were to hear the *mahā-vākya* spoken by an imagined teacher, then the removal of ignorance would occur by knowledge (*vidyā*) about oneself, and Brahman would experience its nature of eternal highest happiness and consciousness. Just as the teacher and *śāstra* conceived by the ignorance of the *jīva* are the cause of the teaching (*upadeśa*), similarly, like the dream-conceived king, the *jīva*-conceived Īśvara also is a cause for results via devotion (*bhajana*). This view supports the position of *eka-jīva-vāda*, the theory is that there is only one *jīva*, and that there is one Īśvara conceived by the one *jīva*, and therefore, the shortcoming (*āpatti*) of multiple Īśvaras also does not arise.

Here a doubt can present itself. If there is only one *jīva*, then the scriptures (*śāstra*) expounding the liberation of Śuka, Vāmadeva and others must be false, since the creation (*saṁsāra*) is real (*vidyamāna*), and therefore, that one *jīva* alone is real, and without that one

⁵¹² I have been unable to locate this exact account in the *BU ŚBh*. At *BU* 2.1.20, in the *ŚBh*, the parable of the abandoned prince brought up in the family of a hunter is narrated by Śaṅkara (1986, 165-6), and Sureśvara in his *Vārtika* also uses the story in the *Sambandha Vārtika* and again later in the context of *BU* 2.1 (1982, 56, vv. 233-4; 630-1, vv. 506-23). The prince grows up thinking he is a hunter and performing the *karma* of a hunter. When told by some kind person that he was of royal stock, he abandons the duties of a hunter and takes on the royal tasks, now knowing himself to be a king. In citing this example, and also its affirmation by Śaṅkara and Sureśvara, Nīścaldās appears to be following Appayya's *SLS* 1 (Dīkṣita and Tīrtha 1973, 104-5).

⁵¹³ In the *MBh*, it is Kṛṣṇa who tells Karṇa of his birth to Kuntī (*MBh* 5.138.11), whereas the Sun withholds this secret from Karṇa when he visits Karṇa in a dream to warn him not to give away his breast-plate and earrings to Indra (*MBh* 3.285.9-10).

jīva's liberation, how can other *jīvas* be liberated?⁵¹⁴ But in this [*dr̥ṣṭi-sr̥ṣṭi-vāda*] view, even by the texts that propound the liberation of Śuka, Vāmadeva and others, only multiple appearances (*ābhāsa*) of *jīvas* are established, similar to multiple persons being conceived in a dream by the dreamer. Just as in a dream, where one dreamer sees multiple persons, someone may go on a wrong road in a great forest and experience suffering due to tigers, etc., while another may travel the royal road and reach one's own city, there the wandering in the forest and the arrival at one's city does not happen to the dreamer, but only to the persons appearing to the dreamer. In the same manner, for the *jīva*, whose nature is Brahman, this *jīva* accompanied by ignorance does not actually attain bondage or liberation; instead, only the apparent (*ābhāsa-rūpa*) *jīvas* attain bondage or liberation, and, on the cessation of their imagined ignorance, they are freed from imagined bondage.

In this context, the question may be asked, "By whose knowledge will liberation in the form of cessation of ignorance occur?" One possible answer is as follows. "By your own knowledge alone can the liberation in the form of cessation of ignorance be possible [because you alone have erected this bondage in the form of *saṃsāra* by your own ignorance]. In reality there is the utter absence (*atyantābhāva*) of bondage." As a second possible answer, "Liberation does not occur by means of anybody's knowledge." This is because, in this view, there is absolute non-existence (*asadbhāva*) of bondage in the *ātmā*. Therefore, it is not possible even to say that the eternally free *ātmā* will be liberated or has been liberated. With this very intent, in this view, the statements propounding liberation have been said to be subordinate statements, praising (*artha-vāda*) [*mokṣa*]. But, those who hold the view that "there is bondage, and, as a result, until now nobody has become liberated, and in future, liberation will happen by means of human effort (*puruṣārtha*)," such persons [who hold that *saṃsāra* and bondage are real] would lose the hope of liberation in the future when even Śuka, Vāmadeva and others did not get liberated, and then would cease to engage in listening to Vedānta (*śravaṇa*). Therefore, as a kindness to those people, the statements propounding the liberation of Śuka, Vāmadeva and others have not been termed subordinate statements of

⁵¹⁴ Śuka is the son of the author of the *Mahābhārata* (and other works), Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa, who is held to have attained liberation while living. Vāmadeva is a Vedic sage (*ṛṣi*) considered to be the author of the fourth *maṇḍala* of the *RV*, and also of the *Aitareya Upaniṣad*. He claimed the knowledge of births of all the gods, while in his mother's womb, and as a result, became immortal, in *AiU* 2 (4).5-6. Vāmadeva is also mentioned in *BU* 1.4.10 as knowing himself as Brahman: "*tadhaitat paśyann ṛṣir vāmadevaḥ pratipede'haṃ manur abhavam sūryaś ceti*. On seeing [that one who realizes oneself as Brahman becomes the All], the sage Vāmadeva affirmed, 'I was Manu, and also the sun.'"

praise (*artha-vāda*) [but are instead said to be injunctions (*vidhi*) for the pursuit of liberation]. Actually, the *ātmā* is eternally liberated Brahman, so there is absolute non-existence of bondage in *ātmā*. Such is the conclusion of wise persons who have ascended to the highest level (*uttama-bhūmikārūḍha*) (*VP* 8.28, 361-3).

According to Niścaldās, the intent (*tātparya*) of these different methods (*prakriyā*) and all the texts of Advaita is that only listening (*śravaṇa*) to Vedānta [texts] can provide the result of becoming free from suffering. This occurs by means of the knowledge of the nature of the ever-liberated *ātmā*, and the attainment of happiness (*sukha*), by obtaining release from the endless kinds of afflictions (*kleśa*) produced by an attitude of agency (*kartavya-buddhi-janya*). Aside from this, the destruction of bondage in *ātmā* or the attainment of liberation in the form of ultimate happiness can never result from listening to Vedānta [texts], because, even before listening to Vedānta, the *ātmā* is ever-liberated, and it does not have the affliction of bondage. Nevertheless, since the endless false bondage is apprehended, one engages (*pravṛtti*) in listening to Vedānta only due to delusion (*bhrama*). One who is not deluded will not engage in such activity (*VP* 8.29, 363).

In this manner, the authors have described the nature of *jīva* and Īśvara in great detail. There is debate about oneness or multiplicity with regard to *jīva*'s nature, but Īśvara is one, omniscient and ever-liberated in all views. No Advaita text accepts the concealment (*āvaraṇa*) of Īśvara. Those who speak of Īśvara's concealment are external to the Vedānta tradition. In Vācaspati's opinion, there are diverse (*nānā*) ignorances that reside in the *jīvas* and make Brahman an object; the Īśvaras and creations (*prapañca*) conceived by the ignorance(s) of the *jīvas* are also considered to be multiple, but these conceived Īśvaras are also considered to be omniscient and their concealment is not accepted (*VP* 8.30, 363).

7.4.5 The Theory of Reflection (*Bimba-pratibimba-vāda*) Compared to the Theory of Appearance (*Ābhāsa-vāda*)

Of the four theories regarding the relation of *jīva* and Īśvara, Niścaldās has given the least attention to the Theory of Delimitation (*avaccheda-vāda*) of the Bhāmatī tradition, possibly because he disagrees with its view of the *jīva* as being consciousness delimited by the *antaḥ-karaṇa*, and also because the theory holds that formless consciousness cannot be reflected, its proponents have to work harder to address the contradiction of the *śruti* and *smṛti* texts that

propound the reflection of consciousness. In the *VS*, Nīscaldās declared that Vidyāraṇya's Theory of Appearance (*ābhāsa-vāda*) is superior to the Theory of Delimitation, and that even Śaṅkara presents the Theory of Appearance in his *Vākya-vṛtti* and *Upadeśa-sāhasrī* (*VS* 4.203, 113; 6.442, 275). He will return to the theory that there is only one *jīva* (Prakāśānanda's *eka-jīva-vāda*);⁵¹⁵ this *eka-jīva-vāda* view was also accepted by him in *VS* 6.328, 201-2. Now Nīscaldās turns to a closer look at the *Vivaraṇa* Theory of Reflection (*bimba-pratibimba-vāda*) and its comparison to the Theory of Appearance, and presents the differences between the views of Vidyāraṇya and Prakāśātman.

According to the author of the *Vivaraṇa*, the reflection is not different from the source. The ray of the eye itself, reflected off (*pratihata*) the mirror that serves as the *upādhi*, makes the face situated on the neck its object. Although the immediate perception of the face on the neck alone occurs, the delusions of facing towards the east or west, being situated in the mirror, and different from oneself may occur, thereby causing the thought [lit. *vyavahāra*, activity], "the reflection is facing east in the mirror and is different from my face" (*VP* 8.31, 364-5).

Vidyāraṇya and others offer three kinds of *jīvas* based on the difference between ultimate (*pāramārthika*), empirical (*vyāvahārika*), and illusory (*prātibhāsika*). The reflection in the empirical *antaḥ-karaṇa* is called the empirical *jīva*, the reflection in the illusory *antaḥ-karaṇa* of the dream state is called the illusory *jīva*. But according to the *Vivaraṇa* view, due to the absence of the reflection apart from the source, the three types of *jīvas* are not possible. Therefore, only the proponents of the three-fold *jīva* theory (*tri-vidha-jīva-vāda*) accept the difference between the source and reflection; in their view alone is there the arising of the *anirvacanīya* reflection in the *upādhis* such as a mirror, etc. According to their view, the mirror, etc., are the material cause as substratum for the reflection, and the proximity of the source is the efficient cause, which is present at the time of the effect of the superimposition of the reflection. When the source goes away, it becomes possible for the effect in the form of the reflection to be absent. However, in the *Vivaraṇa* view, the nature of the reflection is not different from the source, but rather the *anirvacanīya* properties, such as being located in the mirror, facing the opposite direction, and being different from the source, arise in the

⁵¹⁵ In *VP* 8.76-84, discussed in section 8.3.1.

face situated on the neck as a source alone. The face located on the neck is the material cause in the form of the substratum, and the proximate mirror, etc., are the efficient causes for these three properties.

Thus, there are two views in the theory of the reflection of consciousness. In the *Vivaraṇa* view, which is called the Theory of Reflection (*pratibimba-vāda*), due to the identity between the source and the reflection, the nature of the reflection is real. In Vidyāraṇya's view, which is called the Theory of Appearance (*ābhāsa-vāda*), since there is the arising of an *anirvacanīya* appearance of a face in the mirror, the nature of the reflection is false. The refutation and elaboration (*khaṇḍana-maṇḍana*) of both views is clear in many texts, so Nīścaldās does not present them here. However, he states that both views are acceptable; Advaita does not insist on the Theory of Reflection or the Theory of Appearance alone. Only for the sake of the understanding (*bodha*) of the meaning that “the property of *saṃsāra* is not possible in consciousness and there is no mutual difference between *jīva* and *Īśvara*,” has the general survey (*dig-darśana*) of truth been carried in several ways. Then, by whichever view that the seeker comes to understand the unattached Brahman, that view alone is respectable. Nevertheless, Nīścaldās considers it easier to understand the identity of unattached Brahman and *ātmā* in the manner of the theory of the identity of source and reflection (i.e., the *Vivaraṇa* view), because, where there is a worldly reflection of the face, etc., in the mirror and the like, there too the nature of the source remains ever unchanging (*eka-rasa*), and the delusion of difference between the source and reflection occurs only by the proximity of the *upādhi*. Similarly, Brahman-consciousness is ever unchanging, and only by a relation to the *upādhi* of ignorance, etc., does the apprehension of *jīva* and *Īśvara*'s nature in it occur as a delusion. In reality, there is the total absence of difference between *jīva* and *Īśvara* in the unattached consciousness. Although in consciousness, the properties in the form of being *jīva* and *Īśvara* are conceived of as mutually different, the possessor (*dharmin*) of the properties, as *jīva* or *Īśvara*, is neither mutually different nor conceived. Therefore, the theory of identity between source and reflection is very favorable (*anukūla*) to the Advaita view. In the Theory of Appearance, the reflection is *anirvacanīya* and its substratum, namely, the mirror and such, are the *upādhi*. In the Theory of Reflection of the *Vivaraṇa*, the properties of being located in the mirror, facing the opposite direction, etc., are *anirvacanīya*, and their substratum, the face, etc., are the source. In both views, ignorance should be

considered the transforming material cause (*pariṇāmī upādāna*)⁵¹⁶ of the *anirvacanīya* [entities]. Nīścaldās concludes that, from the perspective of grasping the essence (*sāra-grāhī*), only these two positions, the Theory of Appearance and the Theory of Reflection, are reasonable (*yukti-sahita*) (*VP* 8.32-5, 365-7; 8.38, 369).⁵¹⁷

7.5 Chapter Summary

In the previous chapter, a potential objection was raised during the discussion on *akhyāti*, that accepting erroneous cognition leads to the impossibility of definite activity (*pravṛtti*) due to doubts regarding the validity of the cognition. Since one's engaging in any activity is dependent upon the ascertainment of validity, Nīścaldās undertakes a discussion of the nature of validity (*pramāṭva*) and invalidity (*apramāṭva*), their arising, and the types of their cognitions in order to show that the impossibility of definite activity is not applicable to *anirvacanīya-khyāti*. He presents and refutes the Nyāya theory of extrinsic validity (*parataḥ prāmāṇya*), as well as the differing views of Mīmāṃsā. The Advaita theory of intrinsic validity (*svataḥ-prāmāṇya*) was presented as the apprehension of validity by the means of apprehension of cognition which is free from defect. The witness-consciousness (*sākṣī*), accompanied by absence of defect, apprehends validity, whereas invalidity is cognized on experiencing unsuccessful activity and is not the object of the witness-consciousness. The production of invalidity occurs via the cognition-producing means such as sense organs, inference, etc., accompanied by defect, which is external to the means. Thus, invalidity is produced extrinsically: when activity (*pravṛtti*) occurs after an erroneous cognition and the result is not obtained, an inferential cognition of invalidity occurs. Conversely, in the instant of the production of cognition itself, the nature of the cognition and the validity residing in the cognition are illumined by the witness-consciousness. The certainty of that which is *anirvacanīya* is called erroneous certainty (*bhrama-niścaya*). Nīścaldās also includes cognition through contra-factual argument (*tarka-jñāna*) under erroneous cognition, along with erroneous certainty and doubt. In the case of a cognition, the certainty of its validity alone opposes doubt regarding its validity, and it is known by experience that neither

⁵¹⁶ According to R. Balasubramanian, “Brahman-Ātman is the *vivartopādāna-kāraṇa* (transfigurative material cause), *māyā* or *avidyā* is the *pariṇāmyupādāna-kāraṇa* (transformative material cause) of the world” (1988, 152).

⁵¹⁷ Arguments on whether a shadow (*chāyā*) is a reflection or not, and whether the reflection possesses actual substantive nature (*vyāvahārika dravya-rūpatā*) separate from the original are taken up in *VP* 8.36-7, 337-9, but have not been reproduced here for the sake of brevity.

certainty of error nor doubt regarding error occurs in that cognition. Doubt regarding validity is of the form, “is this cognition valid or not?” Similarly, doubt regarding error takes the form “Is this cognition erroneous or not?” These doubts are identical, being concerned with validity and error, albeit in inverse ways. When there is certainty of validity, just as doubt regarding validity no longer persists, similarly doubt regarding error also does not persist. Therefore, in Advaita, even upon accepting erroneous cognition, definite activity is possible.

In this chapter, Nīścaldās next begins his response to the final question on *vr̥tti*s, namely, “what is the purpose of a *vr̥tti*?” In brief, the primary purpose of a *vr̥tti* is the cessation (*niv̥rtti*) of ignorance (*ajñāna*). The cessation of ignorance located in the consciousness (*cetana*) delimited (*avacchinna*) by a pot, etc., is brought about by the *vr̥tti* in the non-*ātmā* form of a pot, etc.; the cessation of ignorance located in the non-delimited consciousness is brought about by the impartite (*akhaṇḍa*) *vr̥tti* in the form of Brahman. That being the case, Nīścaldās next embarks on an investigation of ignorance. According to Vācaspati Mīśra, the individual (*jīva*) is the locus (*āśraya*) of ignorance which is destroyed by *vr̥tti*, and Brahman is its object, i.e., ignorance resides in the *jīva* and conceals Brahman. According to Prakāśātman, the author of the *Vivaraṇa*, and others, pure consciousness alone is the locus and object of ignorance. Just as the illumination of a pot, etc., caused by cognition is termed the object-ness (*viśayatā*) of cognition, similarly the covering up of one’s nature caused by ignorance is termed the object-ness of ignorance. Because being a *jīva* (*jīva-bhāva*) and being Īśvara (*īśvara-bhāva*) depends upon ignorance, the *jīva* caused by ignorance cannot possibly be the locus of ignorance. Nīścaldās considers the terms *ajñāna*, *avidyā*, *prakṛti*, *māyā*, *śakti* and *pradhāna* to be synonymous with ignorance. For Advaita, the entity that has the power (*śakti*) to conceal (*āvaraṇa*) and project (*vikṣepa*), which is beginning-less and the appearance of existence (*bhāva-rūpa*), is named ignorance (*ajñāna*). It is called *avidyā* (lit. absence of knowledge) due to its being destroyed by knowledge (*vidyā*); it is called *prakṛti* and *pradhāna* (both terms for the primordial inert matter which constitutes creation) by being the material cause of the apparent creation (*prapañca*), *māyā* (the illusory power to manifest the empirical creation) because of effecting difficulties (*durghaṭa*), and *śakti* (power) due to absence of independence (*svatantratā*). Ignorance does not have non-negatable reality, but it is acknowledged to have a reality that is different from the empty (*tuccha-rūpa*) unreality, and therefore, it has been called *anirvacanīya*, other than real and unreal. *Anirvacanīya* is

different from Brahman, ultimate reality, and also different from the unreal, such as the horn of a hare, etc., which is always devoid of reality and manifestation (*sattā-sphūrti-śūnya*). For Advaita, ignorance is a positive object of apprehension which is to be negated (*nivartanīya*) by cognition.

Nīścaldās describes Īśvara as the reflection (*pratibimba*) of consciousness in the primordial matter based in pure consciousness (*mūla prakṛti*). *Avidyā* is the portion of *mūla prakṛti* qualified by the concealing power (*āvaraṇa-śakti*). The innumerable *jīvas* are the innumerable reflections of consciousness residing in the innumerable portions of ignorance. The relation between *jīva*, the individual, and Īśvara, the creator, is described diversely. All views accept a three-fold consciousness: 1) *jīva*, 2) Īśvara, and 3) pure Brahman. Because *jīva* and Īśvara have both been considered reflections, what is attained by liberated *jīvas* is Brahman, and not Īśvara. Four theories regarding the relation of *jīva* and Īśvara are considered in considerable detail: 1) Vidyāraṇya's Theory of Appearance, *ābhāsa-vāda*; 2) Prakāśātman's *Vivaraṇa* Theory of Reflection, *bimba-pratibimba-vāda*; 3) The Theory of Delimitation (*avaccheda-vāda*); and 4) the theory of there being only one *jīva* (*eka-jīva-vāda*, *drṣṭi-srṣṭi-vāda*). Of these four, Nīścaldās gives the least attention to the theory of delimitation (*avaccheda-vāda*) of the Bhāmatī tradition, possibly because he disagrees with its considering the *jīva* as being consciousness delimited by the *antaḥ-karaṇa*. In the *VS*, Nīścaldās declares that Vidyāraṇya's Theory of Appearance (*ābhāsa-vāda*) is superior to that of delimitation (*VS* 4.203, 113). The theory that there is only one *jīva*, Prakāśānanda's *eka-jīva-vāda* will be reconsidered in section 8.3.1; Nīścaldās also accepts this *eka-jīva-vāda* or *drṣṭi-srṣṭi* view in *VS* 6.328, 201-2. Nīścaldās presents the differences between the views of Vidyāraṇya and Prakāśātman and then states that both these views are acceptable; there is no insistence on just the Theory of Reflection or the Theory of Appearance. He states that the general survey (*dig-darśana*) of truth has been carried in several ways for the sake of effecting the understanding that "the property (*dharma*) of *saṃsāra* is not possible in consciousness, and that there is no mutual difference between *jīva* and Īśvara." Whichever view delivers the understanding of the unattached Brahman to the seeker, that view alone is respectable. Nevertheless, Nīścaldās considers it easier to understand the identity of unattached Brahman and *ātmā* in the manner of the theory of the identity of source and reflection (i.e., the *Vivaraṇa* view). From the perspective of extracting the essence (*sāra-*

grāhī), only the two positions, the Theory of Appearance and the Theory of Reflection, are reasonable (*yukti-sahita*).

Niścaldās states that the intent (*tātparya*) of these different methods (*prakriyā*) and all the texts of Advaita is that only listening (*śravaṇa*) to Vedānta [texts] provides the result of becoming free from suffering. This is brought about by the knowledge of the nature of the ever-liberated *ātmā*, and by the attainment of happiness (*sukha*) through obtaining release from the endless kinds of afflictions (*kleśa*) that are produced by an attitude of agency. Aside from this, results such as the destruction of bondage in *ātmā* or the attainment of liberation in the form of ultimate happiness can never arise from listening to Vedānta texts (*vedānta-śravaṇa*), because even before listening to Vedānta, the *ātmā* is ever-liberated and it does not have the affliction of bondage either. Nevertheless, since one erroneously apprehends the endless, false bondage, one therefore engages (*pravṛtti*) in listening to Vedānta only due to delusion (*bhrama*). One who is not deluded will not engage in such activity.

In the next chapter, we shall take a look at Niścaldās's more detailed examination of ignorance, the illusoriness of the world, the utility of action and renunciation in gaining knowledge, and a few other issues, before again returning to the purpose of *vṛttis*.

8 Ignorance (*Ajñāna*) Revisited, Illusoriness (*Mithyātva*) & Reality (*Sattā*)

In the previous chapter, we reviewed Niścaldās's treatment of the nature of validity (*pramātvā*) and invalidity (*apramātvā*), an introductory treatment of the nature of ignorance, as well as of the *jīva* (individual) and Īśvara (the theistic creator) and their relationship. Chapter 8 presents Niścaldās's more detailed examination of ignorance, the illusoriness of the world, and whether or not action and renunciation are of utility in gaining knowledge. Niścaldās is laying the ground work for answering the final question on *vyrttis*, namely, "What is their purpose?" The previous chapter considered the Theory of Appearance (Vidyāraṇya's *ābhāsa-vāda*) and the Theory of Reflection (Prakāśātman's *bimba-pratibimba-vāda*). In both these theories, ignorance is considered to be the transforming material cause; as primordial ignorance (*mūlājñāna*), it conceals the nature of Brahman, and, as secondary ignorance (*tūlājñāna* or *avasthā-ajñāna*), it conceals consciousness delimited by the *upādhi* ("limiting adjunct").⁵¹⁸ Niścaldās explores the difference between these two kinds of ignorance as well as the difference between their results in both the empirical and dream spheres. Taking up the perspectives of both the Theory of Appearance and the Theory of Reflection, Niścaldās investigates and addresses objections to either of these kinds of ignorance as the cause for superimposition, and describes the nature of the cessation of such kinds of ignorance in the empirical sphere, even without the knowledge of Brahman. He explores in detail whether the *Pañcapādikā* considers primary or secondary ignorance as the material cause of reflection-superimposition, and whether primary or secondary ignorance is the material cause of dreams. In this context, questions concerning the substratum of the dream state and why dream-superimpositions recur even when negated by waking up are also considered. In this context, in order to understand how dreams are cognized even when the senses are inactive, Niścaldās examines whether a *vyrtti* is required in dreams. Niścaldās will conclude that dreams are illumined by self (*ātma-prakāśa*).

Some thinkers extend the property of self-effulgence (*ātma-prakāśatā*) beyond dreams to the empirical state as well. Therefore, chapter 8 continues with Niścaldās's further investigation of the theory that perception is creation (*dr̥ṣṭi-sṛṣṭi-vāda*), which was presented earlier in section 7.4.4. This theory will be compared with the theory that creation is

⁵¹⁸ See the discussion on *upādhi* on p. 164.

perceived (*sṛṣṭi-drṣṭi-vāda*). In connection with both of these theories, the doubt may arise as to whether the property of being illusory (*mithyātvā*), which is possessed by unreal, i.e., non-*ātmā*, objects, is itself real or unreal. Both options are contrary to the Advaita position, and Nīścaldās provides the resolution of this problem as presented by different Advaita thinkers. He also provides five different ways in which the reality of the visible world (*prapañca*) is negated by its illusoriness (*mithyātvā*) and thus establishes the illusoriness of creation. Nīścaldās next considers the means to dispel this illusoriness, discussing the utility of action (*karma*) in effecting knowledge as proposed by various Advaita thinkers. Similarly, the utility of renunciation (*sannyāsa*) is examined, and the eligibility of kṣatriyas, vaiśyas and śūdras for self-realization through the cultivation of the Divine Properties (*daivī-sampadā*) is presented. This chapter thus prepares the ground for Nīścaldās's treatment of the removal of ignorance and, at long last, the purpose of *vṛttis*, in chapter 9.

8.1 Primordial and Secondary Ignorance (*Mūlājñāna* and *Tūlājñāna*) in the Empirical Sphere

Given that in both the Theory of Appearance and the Theory of Reflection, ignorance is considered to be the transforming material cause (*pariṇāmī upādāna kāraṇa*) of logically indeterminate (*anirvacanīya*) entities, Nīścaldās takes a closer look at what this implies. The common cause (*sādhāraṇa kāraṇa*) of the world (*jagat*) is primordial ignorance (*mūlājñāna*), the ignorance that conceals the nature of Brahman, whereas secondary ignorance (*tūlājñāna* or *avasthā-ajñāna*) is the ignorance that conceals consciousness delimited by an *upādhi*.⁵¹⁹

8.1.1 The Cause of Superimposition: Primordial Ignorance v. Secondary Ignorance

If primordial ignorance itself is called the material cause of being a reflection and other such properties (*dharma*), or the material cause of the property-possessor (*dharmin*), then, like the effects of primordial ignorance, such as space, etc., the property of being a reflection, etc., or the property-possessor in the form of the reflection should also be empirically real. But these have been considered logically indeterminate, as stated earlier; therefore, an objection (O1) can be raised, that it is not possible for primordial ignorance to be the material cause of these *anirvacanīya* entities. Further, according to the *Vivaraṇa* view [the Theory of

⁵¹⁹ Whether the primordial and secondary ignorances are different or identical will be discussed shortly, at *VP* 8.42, 370-1, on p. 257 below.

Reflection], the material cause of the properties of being a reflection, etc., is considered to be the ignorance located in the consciousness delimited by the face, and, according to Vidyāraṇya's view [the Theory of Appearance], the material cause of the *anirvacanīya* reflections is considered to be the ignorance located in the consciousness delimited by the mirror. When the effect (*kārya*) of secondary ignorance (*avasthā-ajñāna*) is considered to be *anirvacanīya*, although the shortcoming (*āpatti*) of reality is not present in those *anirvacanīya* effects, nevertheless, the cessation of the *anirvacanīya* [effect] occurs by the cognition of the substratum. In this case, the substratum of the reflection-superimposition (*pratibimbādhyāsa*) is either the consciousness delimited by the face [per Theory of Reflection], or consciousness delimited by the mirror [per Theory of Appearance], and the cognition of the substratum is either the cognition of the face or the cognition of the mirror [correspondingly]. But [the alternative objection (O2) can be raised that] everyone experiences the apprehension of reflections even in the instants subsequent to the cognition of the face or the mirror, and therefore, it is also not possible that the secondary ignorance, which is the concealer of either the consciousness delimited by the face or the consciousness delimited by the mirror, can also be the material cause of the reflection-superimposition (*VP* 8.39, 369-70).

Nīścaldās provides two possible refutations (R1 and R2) to these objections (O1 and O2 respectively), without offering their specific attribution. R2: According to “a certain [unidentified] author (*koṭika granthakāra*),” although in superimpositions, such as silver on mother-of-pearl, both the concealing and projecting portions of ignorance are removed by the particular cognition of the substratum, one's experience is that, by the cognition of the substratum of the reflection-superimposition, only the concealing portion of ignorance is removed. Due to the persistence of the projection-causing portion of ignorance even subsequent to the cognition of the substratum, the reflections and their cognitions remain present. Thus, the position that reflection-superimpositions are the effects of secondary ignorance located in consciousness delimited by the *upādhi* is possible. R1: According to “other authors (*anya granthakār*, pl.),” primordial ignorance is the material cause of the mirror and such, and also the material cause of the reflection-superimpositions. Therefore, even after the cognition of the mirror, etc., has occurred, the apprehension of the reflection persists. Although, with the knowledge of Brahman, there is the cessation of the ignorance

which conceals Brahman-consciousness, and of the effects of that ignorance, yet, with the cognition of the mirror, etc., even on the cessation of the ignorance that conceals the consciousness delimited by the mirror, etc., the cessation of the ignorance that conceals the nature of Brahman does not occur. Thus, by accepting primordial ignorance as the material cause of the reflection-superimpositions, even after the cognition of the mirror, etc., reflection-superimpositions are possible (*VP* 8.40-1, 370).

8.1.2 The Difference between Primordial and Secondary Ignorance

What is the difference between primordial and secondary ignorance? When one accepts primordial ignorance as the material cause of reflection-superimposition in the above (R1) manner, the reflection, etc., should also remain empirical like the mirror, etc. Further, since the conception of falseness (*mithyātvā-buddhi*) occurs in the reflections and in the properties of being a reflection, etc., even without knowledge of Brahman, these [reflections] are considered to be illusory. But it is not possible for them to be illusory if primordial ignorance is considered the material cause of the superimposition. Nevertheless, the effects of the ignorance that are removed by the knowledge of Brahman are considered empirical, and the effects of ignorance that are removed without the knowledge of Brahman are considered illusory. [The effect of ignorance, the reflection in the mirror, should not persist once the ignorance is removed, but it continues to do so, hence it ought to be considered empirical]. Thus, the empirical and the illusory need to be distinguished differently. “The effect that is produced by ignorance alone, and not by defects other than ignorance, is empirical; the effect that is produced by defects as well as ignorance is illusory.” When the relation of the face, etc., with the mirror, etc., arises, there occurs a transformation of either the property of being a reflection, etc., or the property-possessor as a reflection, etc., of primordial ignorance located in Brahman-consciousness, and in both cases the substratum remains Brahman-consciousness alone. In this manner, when the reflection-superimpositions are not produced by defects other than ignorance, then they can only be empirical (*VP* 8.42, 370-1).

If secondary ignorance (*tūlājñāna*) is considered to be the material cause of the stated superimpositions, upon accepting the arising of a reflection according to Vidyāraṇya’s [Theory of Appearance] view, the consciousness delimited by the mirror, etc., is the substratum, and the ignorance located in the consciousness delimited by the mirror, etc. is the

material cause. Upon accepting the arising of the properties of being a reflection, etc., according to the *Vivaraṇa* [Theory of Reflection] view, the consciousness delimited by the face is the substratum, and the ignorance located in the consciousness delimited by the face is the material cause. But when one considers primordial ignorance to be the material cause, the difference between these substrata is not possible; hence, Nīścaldās suggests that primordial ignorance alone should be considered the material cause of both kinds of superimpositions (*VP* 8.43-6, 371-4).⁵²⁰

8.1.3 The Nature of the Cessation of Empirical Superimposition

This begs the obvious question that, if only primordial ignorance located in the Brahman-consciousness be considered the material cause of reflection-superimposition, then surely the cessation of the reflection-superimposition should not occur without knowledge of Brahman? Nīścaldās's answer is as follows. Ignorance has two parts, the concealing power and the projection power. The total (*aśeṣa*) cessation of ignorance occurs only by the cognition of the substratum devoid of obstructions. But as long as there remains the obstruction of *prārabdha karmas* (the accumulation of the karmic results of past actions), the cessation of the portion of ignorance that is the cause of projection does not occur, even on the cognition of the substratum as Brahman. Where the cognition pertaining to objects other than the *ātmā* (*anātmā padārtha*) such as a pot, etc., occurs, the cessation of their ignorance does not occur as long as the manifestation (*sphuraṇa*) of the pot, etc., persists. But there is a reduction in the concealment caused by ignorance similar to the manner in which the illumination due to light in one location causes a reduction (*saṅkoca*) in the darkness within a house enveloped by darkness. Similarly, although the cessation of primordial ignorance covering Brahman does not take place through the immediate perceptual cognition of the face, mirror, etc., even so, due to their cognition, a reduction in the material cause [of the reflection-superimposition projection produced by ignorance] takes place in the form of its dissolution (*vilaya*). This dissolution of the material cause is called the subtle state (*sūkṣma avasthā*) of the effect. Thus, although the cessation (*nivṛtti*) of ignorance in the form of the negation (*bādhā*) of the reflection-superimposition is not possible because of the absence of the cognition of the

⁵²⁰ The details of Nīścaldās's arguments for the validity of considering primordial ignorance as the material cause (*VP* 8.44) and the invalidity of considering secondary ignorance as the material cause of reflection-superimposition (*VP* 8.45-6) have not been presented here, for reasons of economy.

substratum [as Brahman], the cessation of the effect occurs in the form of the dissolution of the material cause due to the removal (lit. absence, *abhāva*) of the obstacle (*pratibandhaka*) that takes place by the cognition of the face, mirror, etc. (*VP* 8.48, 374-5).

What is the nature of the negation (*bādhā*)? According to Niścaldās, some (*koī ekadeśī*, pl.)⁵²¹ hold that in the state of worldly life (*saṃsāra*), the negation of the reflection-superimposition does not occur as just described. In this view, the ascertainment (*niścaya*) of absence is not considered to be a negation because the ascertainment of absence of the superimposition in the manner of “the face does not possess [the property of] being located in the mirror,” or “there is no face in the mirror,” according to the *Vivaraṇa* [Theory of Reflection] or Vidyāraṇya [Theory of Appearance] views respectively, is known through experience, even by all non-learned persons; yet in the state of worldly life it is not possible to speak of the negation of those superimpositions. Therefore, in the opinion where the negation of reflection-superimposition is not accepted without the knowledge of Brahman, the negation here is simply the remaining of the substratum (*adhiṣṭhāna-śeṣa*). Even if the ascertainment of the absence of the reflection-superimpositions takes place in the worldly state as just stated, due to the existence (*sattā*) of ignorance, the mere substratum does not remain; instead, the substratum qualified by ignorance remains. Thus, through the immediate perceptual cognition of the face, mirror, etc., without obstructions, and despite the absence of the cessation of ignorance in the form of negation [because the substratum has not been cognized as Brahman], the reduction (*saṅkoca*) of the effect [the ignorance-caused projection of the reflection] occurs in the form of the dissolution in its own material cause. The persistence (*sthiti*) of the effect (*kārya*) in the form of the material cause is called the subtle state (*sūkṣmāvasthā*) (*VP* 8.49, 375).

According to several [other unspecified] authors, the negation of the reflection-superimposition produced by primordial ignorance takes place without the knowledge of Brahman, and without the destruction of primordial ignorance. Their purport is that negation refers to the ascertainment of illusoriness (*mithyātva*) or the ascertainment of absence itself. In many cases, where the ascertainment of either falsity or absence of an object occurs, there only the substratum remains, and ignorance does not remain. With precisely this intent, one

⁵²¹ Again, it is difficult to identify whose view is being presented here.

[unspecified] author has described negation as the remaining of only the substratum, but this is not the definition of negation. If it were, then in the case where a crystal is erroneously cognized as having an *upādhi* of redness, etc., even in the instant after the cognition of the substratum, the obstruction of the mutual relation of the *japā* flower (China rose) and the crystal still remains, and hence the cessation of the superimposition of redness should not occur. Similarly, while the obstruction of the *prārabdha karmas* of a wise person persists, the cessation of the body, etc., does not occur. If only the remaining (*śeṣa*) of the substratum were said to be the definition of negation, then the body of a wise person should cease to be. Therefore, in both these cases, owing to the effect-qualified (*kārya-viśiṣṭa*) ignorance and the substratum both being in one place, and because the substratum does not remain by itself [post-cognition], the operation (*vyavahāra*) of negation should not occur. But the negation of the superimposition of redness does occur by means of the immediate perception (*sākṣātkāra*) of a clear crystal, and, for a wise person liberated while living (*jīvan-mukta*), despite the body still remaining, *saṃsāra* is negated by the immediate perception of Brahman. Thus, by means of the cognition of the face, mirror, etc., devoid of obstructions, the properties of being a reflection, etc., and the property-possessor reflection, etc., are ascertained to be false and absent in the face and mirror respectively. Therefore, it is improper (*ayukta*) to say that “without knowledge of Brahman, the negation of reflection-superimpositions does not occur.” (*VP* 8.50, 375-6).

8.1.4 Cessation of Superimpositions through Opposing Cognitions

Just as the cessation of the superimposition in the form of a negation occurs through the cognition of the substratum, similarly the cessation of the reflection-superimpositions by the immediate cognition of the face, mirror, etc., in a time devoid of obstructions is experientially known, and it can also be accepted as a cause for the cessation of superimposition. It is the rule that only a cognition that has the same object opposes ignorance, whereas a cognition of a different object does not. Therefore, the cognition of the face, mirror, etc., only opposes the secondary ignorance situated in the consciousness delimited by the face, mirror, etc. And no other cognition besides the knowledge of Brahman opposes primordial ignorance that obscures Brahman. Hence, the cognition of the face, mirror, etc., does not oppose primordial ignorance that opposes the knowledge of Brahman,

but although the cessation of the material cause of the reflection-superimposition, namely, primordial ignorance, does not occur, nevertheless, even without the cessation of the [primordial] ignorance, the cessation of an earlier [mis-]cognition by means of its opposing cognition is certainly experientially known (*VP* 8.51, 376-7).

In the case where, due to ignorance of the rope, one erroneously cognizes a snake, and then subsequently erroneously cognizes a stick, in that case, the stick cognition does not bring about cessation of the secondary ignorance which is the material cause of the snake because the cessation of ignorance only takes place through the direct cognition (*aparokṣa-jñāna*) of the substratum. Therefore, without the cognition of the rope, the cessation of the ignorance located in the rope-consciousness is not possible because, even if were possible to bring about the cessation of the ignorance located in the rope-consciousness by erroneous cognition of the stick, subsequently, due to the absence of the material cause [namely, the ignorance of the rope], the stick-superimposition would not be established. Nevertheless, just as the snake-superimposition ceases due to the stick-cognition without the cessation of ignorance, similarly, the cognitions of the face and mirror of the type “the face does not possess [the property of] being a reflection” or “the face is not in the mirror,” being opposed to the reflection-superimposition, bring about the cessation of the reflection-superimposition without causing the cessation of primordial ignorance that is the material cause of the reflection-superimposition. If it were said that these cognitions also bring about the cessation of primordial ignorance, then empirical objects like face, mirror, etc., that are the effects (*kārya*) of primordial ignorance should also be destroyed. Therefore, even without the cessation of primordial ignorance, the cognitions of the face, mirror, etc., being of opposing objects (*virodhī-viśayaka*), destroy the reflection-superimposition. Just as presence and absence are mutually opposed, their cognitions also are mutually opposed. Where the erroneous cognition of a person occurs in a post after the cognition of the post, there, the cessation of the prior valid cognition is brought about even by the opposing erroneous cognition “there is no [property of] being a post (*sthānutvam*).” In the case of the ground with a pot on it, after the erroneous cognition of the absence of the pot, when there is the contact of the senses with the pot, then the cessation of the prior erroneous cognition is brought about by the opposing valid cognition, “the ground has a pot [on it].” Similarly, after the erroneous snake-cognition in the rope, the cessation of the erroneous snake-cognition is

brought about by the erroneous stick-cognition, despite the fact that both these cognitions are erroneous. In this manner, sometimes the cessation of a valid cognition is brought about by an opposing erroneous cognition, sometimes the cessation of an erroneous cognition is brought about by an opposing valid cognition, and sometimes the cessation of one erroneous cognition is brought about by another opposing erroneous cognition. Where the cessation of a valid cognition is brought about by an erroneous cognition, or the cessation of one erroneous cognition is brought about by another opposing erroneous cognition, the cessation of the prior cognitions is brought about just by the existence of the ignorance that is the material cause of the erroneous cognition. But where the cessation of an erroneous cognition is brought about by a valid cognition, due to the true cognition of the substratum being valid (*pramā*), it brings about the cessation of the erroneous cognition along with ignorance. Thus, the cessation of a reflection-superimposition is possible by the cognition of the face, mirror, etc., without the cognition of the substratum and also without the cessation of primordial ignorance.

In other words, it is a rule that the cessation of the prior cognition is brought about by another opposing cognition. But it is not a rule that the cessation of the prior erroneous cognition should be brought about only by the true cognition of the substratum; rather, it can also be brought about by another erroneous cognition. Yes, it is certainly the rule that the cessation of ignorance does not occur without the true cognition of the substratum, and this cessation occurs only by the particular valid cognition of the substratum. In this situation, according to the *Vivaraṇa* [Theory of Reflection] view, the superimposition is “the face possesses [the properties of] being a reflection, which is located in the mirror, facing the opposite direction,” and its opposing cognition is “the face does not possess [the properties of] being a reflection, etc.” In Vidyāraṇya’s [Theory of Appearance] view, the superimposition is “the face is in the mirror,” and its opposing cognition is “the face is not in the mirror.” Even in the Nyāya view, which accepts the mutual opposition of presence and absence, the opposition of the objects also implies the opposition of their cognition. Hence, even accepting primordial ignorance as the material cause of the reflection-superimpositions, at the time of the presence of the obstruction of the proximity of the source and *upādhi*, even without the cessation of primordial ignorance, only by the cognition of the face, mirror, etc., the cessation of the stated reflection-superimpositions is possible (*VP* 8.52, 377-8).

8.1.5 Refutation of Secondary Ignorance as the Material Cause of Reflection-superimposition

Nīścaldās now raises a *prima-facie* objection (*pūrva-pakṣa*) on behalf of those who consider secondary ignorance as the material cause of reflection-superimposition:

“Padmapāda wrote the *Pañcapādikā* commentary (*tīkā*) to the [*Śaṅkara*-]*bhāṣya* on the *Brahma-sūtra* (*śārīraka*), and he attained enlightenment [lit. omniscience (*sarvajñatā*)] through the teachings [lit. words (*vacana*)] of Śaṅkara. In the enlightened *Pañcapādikā* commentary it is written: “Where erroneous cognitions such as snake, silver, etc., occur, there the cessation of ignorance in the form of the material cause of the snake, silver, etc., is brought about by the cognition of the rope and mother-of-pearl, and, through the cessation of ignorance, the cessation of the superimposition of the snake, silver, etc., takes place. If the cognition of the rope, mother-of-pearl, etc., be considered the immediate (*sākṣāt*) cause in the cessation of the snake, mother-of-pearl, etc., then the rule that ‘a positive effect (*bhāva-kārya*) is only destroyed by the destruction of the material cause’ will be violated. But if it be considered that the destruction of ignorance occurs through the cognition of the substratum, and that, by the destruction of ignorance, the destruction of the superimposition occurs, then the stated rule is not violated. Although ignorance has an appearance of existence (*bhāva-rūpa*) like darkness, since it is beginning-less, it cannot be an effect. Therefore, the cessation of ignorance can only be possible through the cognition of the substratum, but the cessation of the positive effects like the superimpositions of snake, etc., is not possible without the destruction of the material cause, namely, ignorance. Although the cessation of the destruction of the pot (*ghaṭa-dhvaṃsa*) has been accepted in the Vedānta view, there is no material cause of a non-existent object; therefore, although even without the destruction of the material cause, the effect is destroyed in the form of the destruction of the pot, but the destruction of the pot is not an actual (*bhāva*) effect. In this manner, in order to preserve the invariable causality (*niyata hetutā*) of the destruction of the material cause in the destruction of an positive effect, in the *Pañcapādikā*, the cognition of the substratum has been stated as a cause of the cessation of superimposition only via the cessation of ignorance, and it is prohibited (*niṣedha*) to forsake the cessation of ignorance and consider only the cognition of the substratum as the immediate cause of the cessation of superimposition. But upon accepting primordial ignorance as the material cause of the reflection-superimposition, one

must accept the cessation of the reflection-superimposition in the previously mentioned manner, without the cessation of ignorance, thereby opposing the *Pañcapādikā* statement. Instead, if secondary ignorance is considered the material cause of the stated superimposition, there is no opposition [to the *Pañcapādikā* statement] because in the opinion of those who follow the *Vivaraṇa* view, the ignorance located in the consciousness delimited by the face is established as the material cause of the property-superimposition (*dharmādhyāsa*), and also in the opinion of those who follow Vidyāraṇya, the ignorance located in the consciousness delimited by the mirror is established as the cause of the superimposition on the property-possessor (*dharmī adhyāsa*). During the time when there are no obstructions, the cessation of those ignorances is brought about by the cognition of the face or the mirror respectively, and then by the cessation of ignorance [in the form of the material cause], the cessation of the reflection-superimposition occurs. Therefore, considering secondary ignorance to be the material cause of the reflection-superimposition conforms with the *Pañcapādikā* view, and to consider primordial ignorance as the material cause goes against the *Pañcapādikā*” (VP 8.53, 378-80).

Nīścaldās addresses this objection by first demonstrating its inappropriateness. Even if, according to the section above, secondary ignorance were to be accepted as the material cause for reflection-superimposition, even then the contradiction of the *Pañcapādikā* statement would not be remedied (*parihāra*): Where Yajñadatta, without a relation to the mirror, has the immediate perception of either Devadatta’s face or the mirror without Devadatta’s face, and, in the following instant, the relation of Devadatta’s face with the mirror occurs, then reflection-superimposition takes place there. If primordial ignorance were considered the material cause, then by the cognition of the face and mirror, the cessation of primordial ignorance does not occur; instead, only the cessation of the ignorance located in the consciousness delimited by the face takes place through the cognition of the face, and, through the cognition of the mirror, the cessation of the ignorance located in the consciousness delimited by the mirror takes place. Even in the instant following the immediate cognition of the face and mirror, due to the proximity of the face and the mirror, the reflection-superimposition is again possible. Although the immediate cognition of the face and mirror destroys the portion of secondary ignorance qualified by its concealing power, nevertheless, the portion [of secondary ignorance] qualified by its projection power is

not destroyed,⁵²² and hence the superimposition can still be possible in the substratum that is particularly cognized (*viśeṣa-rūpa se jñāta*⁵²³). Nevertheless, what the proponent of secondary ignorance asserts is not possible in this case: namely, that upon the mutual separation of the face and the mirror, by means of the cognition of the substratum accompanied by the absence of obstructions, the cessation of superimposition has occurred by means of the cessation of ignorance. Here instead, one can only say that the cessation of the immediate (*sākṣāt*) superimposition has occurred by means of cognition [without the cessation of ignorance]. This is so because the cognition of the rope does not destroy the ignorance of mother-of-pearl, and therefore, all ignorance (*ajñāna-mātra*) does not get destroyed by a cognition but only the ignorance that has same object (*samāna-viśayaka ajñāna*) gets destroyed by the [object's] cognition. That which is illuminated by cognition is said to be the object (*viśaya*) of cognition, and that which is concealed due to ignorance is said to be the object of ignorance. Here, in the time before the superimposition [of Devadatta's face in the mirror], when Yajñadatta has had the immediate perception of Devadatta's face and the mirror, due to the resulting destruction of the concealment, the concealing ignorance is absent in both the face and mirror. Therefore, even the proponent of the secondary ignorance [as the material cause of the superimposition] has to accept that in the location having the same object, which causes the opposition of cognition and ignorance, the cessation of only the superimposition takes place without the cessation of ignorance. In this manner, despite taking secondary ignorance to be the material cause of reflection-superimposition, the contradiction of the *Pañcapādikā* statement is not remedied (*VP* 8.54, 380-1).

Nīścaladās explains that this contradiction occurs only if secondary ignorance is accepted as the cause of reflection-superimposition, but not if primordial ignorance is accepted as the cause. It is not the intent of the *Pañcapādikā* that, “by cognition, only the cessation of ignorance is brought about, and, by the cessation of the material cause in the form of ignorance, the cessation of the effect of ignorance takes place.” The destruction of the material cause is the invariable (*niyata*) cause of the destruction of the positive effect (*bhāva-*

⁵²² This phrase is left out in the KS ed. (*VP* 8.53, 380), shown here in bold, following Nīśchaladāsa (1868, 8.15): ... *avasthā ajñāna ke āvaraṇa-śakti-viśiṣṭa ajñānāmsā kā nāśa huyām bī vikṣepa-śakti-viśiṣṭa ajñānāmsā kā nāśa nahīm hone taiṃ* ...

⁵²³ This is erroneously printed in the KS ed. (*VP* 8.53, 380) as *viśeṣa-rūpa taiṃ jñānādiṣṭhāna maiṃ* ... I have emended it as *jñātādhiṣṭhāna* ... per Nīśchaladāsa (1868, 8.15).

kārya), and thus the cessation of immediate superimposition is not possible by cognition. If the destruction of the positive effect does not occur without the destruction of the material cause, then the destruction of the material cause is the invariable (*niyata*) cause of the destruction of the positive effect; but, where the positive effect is a dyad (*dvyanuṅka*) and its material cause is the atom, the atom is eternal and its destruction is not at all possible. Although the destruction of the dyad does occur from the destruction of the contact between the atoms, this is a counter-example to the requirement that the destruction of the material cause is the cause of the destruction of the positive effect. Therefore, the *Pañcapādikā* statement cannot have the intention of the preservation of this requirement. If it were insisted that the *Pañcapādikā* statement indeed has the intent of the preservation of this rule, then the cessation of the [erroneous] snake-cognition [with regard to the rope] would not occur by the [erroneous] cognition of the stick.

Although, even in the Nyāya view, the destruction of the material cause has been considered the cause of the destruction of substances other than dyads, nevertheless, if the destruction of the material cause is said to be the cause of the destruction of all positive effects, then the atoms and the mind too are eternal substances [per Nyāya], and therefore, since their destruction is impossible, none of their actions will ever be destroyed. Similarly, there will be no destruction of the attributes (*guṇa*) of the eternal *ātmā*, such as cognition, etc., or of the attributes of eternal space, such as sound, etc. Therefore, it is improper (*asaṅgata*) to state that the destruction of the material cause is the invariable cause in the destruction of the positive effect. If, in some cases, upon the destruction of the substratum (*āśraya*), the effect does not remain, then the destruction of the material cause is the cause of the destruction of the effect. Still, the destruction of the material cause cannot be said to be the invariable cause because, even during the existence of the material cause, the destruction of the effect can occur due to other reasons as well. Thus, the *Pañcapādikā* statement was not made with the intent of the preservation of the above rule; instead, the meaning of this statement is that, where the cessation of the superimposition occurs through the cognition of the substratum, the cognition of the substratum is not the immediate cause of the cessation of the superimposition, but the cognition of the substratum is the cause of the cessation of ignorance, and that in turn is the cause of the cessation of superimposition. Just as the potter's father, being a dispensable antecedent (*anyathā-siddha*), is not the cause of the pot,

similarly the cognition of the substratum, as a dispensable antecedent, is not the cause for the cessation of superimposition. Thus, where the cessation of a superimposition is spoken of by means of the cognition of the substratum, only the cessation of ignorance is brought about by the cognition of the substratum. Then, by the destruction of ignorance in the form of the material cause, the cessation of the superimposition occurs; this is the purport of the *Pañcapādikā*. If the purport of the *Pañcapādikā* were that “the cessation of superimposition occurs in all cases through the cessation of ignorance,” then, without the cessation of ignorance, even the cessation of snake-cognition should not occur by the stick-cognition. Therefore, where the cessation of superimposition occurs by means of the true cognition of the substratum, there the cessation of superimposition occurs only through the cessation of ignorance – this is the rule explained in the *Pañcapādikā*.

For those who consider secondary ignorance to be the cause of reflection-superimposition, the cognition of the face, mirror, etc., itself is the cognition of the substratum, and to accept the cessation of superimposition through the cessation of ignorance by the cognition of the substratum is in accordance with the *Pañcapādikā*. But where the proximity of the *upādhi* of Devadatta’s face occurs for Yajñadatta in the place where the concealment [portion of ignorance] has been destroyed due to prior cognition, and through it the reflection-superimposition of Devadatta’s face occurs, and in the time of the removal (*viyoga*) of the *upādhi*, the cessation of superimposition occurs through the cognition of the substratum, there it is not possible for the cessation of superimposition to occur through the cessation of ignorance, but instead the cessation of the immediate superimposition occurs through the cognition of the substratum. This is opposed to the *Pañcapādikā*. But if primordial ignorance is considered to be the material cause of reflection-superimposition, then, where the cessation of reflection-superimposition occurs through the cognition of the face, mirror, etc., there the face, mirror, etc., are not the substratum (*adhiṣṭhānatā*), and therefore, one cannot speak of the cessation of superimposition being caused by cognition of the substratum. Instead, the cessation of superimposition is caused by the cognition of an opposing object that is in opposition to the cognition of the face, mirror, etc. But in the *Pañcapādikā*, the cessation of superimposition caused by the cognition of the substratum is only spoken of through the cessation of ignorance, and, apart from the cognition of the substratum, other means (*dvāratā*) for the cessation of superimposition are not spoken of

(*vivakṣita*). So, if primordial ignorance is considered the material cause of reflection-superimposition, then the cessation of superimposition caused by the cognition of the face, mirror, etc., does not classify as being caused by the cognition of the substratum. If secondary ignorance is considered to be the material cause for the superimposition, then, although the cessation of superimposition caused by the cognition of the face, mirror, etc., does qualify as being caused by the cognition of the substratum, it does not qualify as the cessation of ignorance. But according to the *Pañcapādikā*, where the cessation of superimposition occurs through the cognition of the substratum, it is only spoken of as occurring through the cessation of ignorance, and, where superimposition occurs in a previously cognized substratum and then ceases, there the cessation of superimposition is not possible by cessation of ignorance as just stated. Thus, if secondary ignorance is considered to be the material cause of reflection-superimposition, then the *Pañcapādikā* is contradicted; and, if primordial ignorance is considered to be the material cause of the said superimposition, there is no contradiction (*VP* 8.55, 381-3).

As a summation of this discussion on the material cause of empirical reflection-superimposition, Nīscaldās states that reflection-superimposition, similar to space and the rest of creation (*prapañca*), is caused by primordial ignorance. But in the manner of some (*eka-deśī*), on account of its cessation in the form of negation not occurring without the knowledge of Brahman, although there is the conjecture [lit. doubt (*śaṅkā*)]⁵²⁴ of reflection-superimposition possessing empiricity, nevertheless the relation of the source and the *upādhi* [in the superimposition] is adventitious (*āgantuka*) and therefore, it is considered illusory. The superimposition of space and the rest of creation is caused by mere ignorance, and therefore, is empirical. But in reflection-superimposition, even without the cognition of the substratum in the manner already mentioned, its cessation is possible in the form of negation through an opposing cognition in the worldly state (*saṃsāra-daśā*) itself, and therefore, it becomes possible for the superimposition to possess illusoriness in the form of negatability (*bādhyatva*) (*VP* 8.56, 383).

⁵²⁴ Ātmānand Muni uses *gumāna*, “conjecture, supposition, conceit” instead of *śaṅkā* (Nīscaldās 1957, 536).

Just as primordial ignorance and secondary ignorance are considered material cause for reflection-superimposition through differing opinions, similarly, dream-superimposition is caused by primordial ignorance in some views, and by secondary ignorance in others. We shall examine these views next.

8.2 Primordial and Secondary Ignorance (*Mūlājñāna* and *Tūlājñāna*) in Dreams

Secondary ignorance is considered the material cause of dreams. Sleep is a particular state (*avasthā-viśeṣa*) of ignorance, since the definition of ignorance is that which possesses concealing and projection powers,⁵²⁵ and, in the time of dream, the concealment of the waking seer⁵²⁶ (*draṣṭā*) and seen (*dṛśya*) is experientially known. For example, in the waking state, when a person named Devadatta, of brahman caste, possessing a son, wealth and other good fortune, after the death of his father and grandfather, having cremated them and performed the *śrāddha*⁵²⁷ and other rituals for them, goes to sleep, he experiences himself as someone named Yajñadatta of kṣatriya caste, as a child suffering from hunger and cold due to the unavailability of food and clothing, and crying in the lap (*aṅka*) of his father or grandfather. In this case, if it were said that the empirical seer and seen of the waking state are concealed by primordial ignorance, then they should be concealed even in the waking state since there is no other concealer perceived in the waking state other than primordial ignorance. Therefore, it will have to be accepted that in the dream, sleep (*nidrā*) itself conceals, and sleep itself transforms into the forms of the dream objects. Therefore, sleep is qualified by the power to conceal and project, and, since the attribute of ignorance is connected (*ghaṭita*) with sleep, sleep is a particular state of ignorance. But secondary ignorance has a beginning because, when primordial ignorance itself, qualified by adventitious (*āgantuka*) form conceals to some extent consciousness delimited by the *upādhi*, then it is considered secondary ignorance (*avasthā-ajñāna* or *tūlājñāna*). The cessation (*uparāma*) of the actions that are the cause of experience (*bhoga*) in the waking state is the efficient cause of the arising of secondary ignorance. Also, since secondary ignorance is a particular form of primordial ignorance, primordial ignorance alone is the material cause of

⁵²⁵ VP 8.57, 384: *āvaraṇa-vikṣepa-śakti-yuktatā ajñāna kā lakṣaṇa hai*.

⁵²⁶ “Seer” here is being used in the sense of “one who sees” (as opposed to “sage”).

⁵²⁷ MW defines *śrāddha* as “a ceremony in honour and for the benefit of dead relatives observed with great strictness at various fixed periods and on occasions of rejoicing as well as mourning by the surviving relatives ...”

secondary ignorance. In the illustration, the illusory seer (*draṣṭā*) concealed by secondary ignorance in the form of sleep is superimposed on the empirical seer, and the illusory vision concealed by that sleep is superimposed on the empirical vision. Therefore, the substratum of the illusory seer is the empirical seer, and the substratum of the illusory vision is the empirical vision. But, when actions approach (*abhimukha*) the waking state experience (*bhoga*), then the waking state arises again, and, in that time, whatever cognition of the empirical seer-seen occurs to the persons devoid of knowledge of Brahman, that itself is the cognition of the substratum of the dream. This brings about the cessation of the material cause in the form of secondary ignorance from which the cessation of the illusory seer-seen takes place. The cessation of the illusory seer-seen occurs with the cognition of the empirical seer-seen (*VP* 8.57,383-4).

Nīścaldās raises a doubt in connection with the above view. In the manner just stated, there is the difference between the seer in the waking state and the seer in the dream state, and the experience of the dream state is recalled in the waking state. Now, if the experience of one seer should occur as a recollection (*smṛti*) to another, then Devadatta's experience should be recalled (*smṛti*) by Yajñadatta, [which is absurd]. Therefore, if the difference between the seers is accepted, then the recollection of the dream experience will not be possible. Nīścaldās resolves this doubt as follows. Although the experience of one person is not recalled by another, nevertheless one's own experience is recalled by oneself, and, in just this way, the experience, having identity with oneself (*sva-tādātmya*), is also recalled by oneself. There is no mutual identity (*tādātmya*) between Devadatta and Yajñadatta, but the dream-state seer, being superimposed on the waking-state seer, has identity with the waking-state seer; the superimposed object always has identity with its own substratum. Thus, the waking-state seer can recall the dream-state seer's experience, the two having mutual identity, and so the material cause of dream-superimposition is the secondary ignorance in the form of sleep (*VP* 8.58-9, 385).

8.2.1 The Substratum of the Dream State

In the dream state, if only what is seen is accepted as produced by ignorance, then it is not possible for the empirical *jīva* of the waking state to be considered its seer because [in dream state] the nature of the empirical *jīva* remains concealed by ignorance in the form of

sleep. It is the rule that the immediate perception of an object occurs only when the object is in relation to an unconcealed *jīva*. Therefore, if the waking state *jīva* concealed by sleep is considered to be the seer of the dream, then the immediate cognition of the dream creation will not be possible. Therefore, Nīścaldās accepts the fact that the dream-state seer is also superimposed on the empirical *jīva* and is unconcealed. The immediate cognition of the illusory vision is possible by its relation to the seer in the dream state. The authors who believe that the *jīva* is of three kinds – ultimate, empirical, and illusory – maintain that the substratum of the dream state is only the empirical *jīva* and the world (*jagat*). But this view is illogical (*ayukta*), because the empirical seer is also inert (*jaḍa*), like the vision, on account of being non-*ātmā*. Therefore, it is not possible for the empirical seer to be the substratum imparting reality (*sattā*) and manifestation (*sphūrṭi*). Instead, Nīścaldās considers consciousness alone as the substratum of the dream state. That is why, where the substratum of snake and silver is said to be the rope and mother-of-pearl, it means that the substratum is rope-delimited consciousness and mother-of-pearl-delimited consciousness alone. Consciousness itself has been posited as the substratum of the dream-state creation in many texts, too. Therefore, the substratum of the dream state is either 1) ego-delimited consciousness, or 2) consciousness not delimited by ego (*ahaṅkāra*). Both of these views are authoritative (*prāmāṇika*).

If ego-delimited consciousness (1) is considered the substratum, then it will not be possible to conceal consciousness by primordial ignorance. Therefore, only the secondary ignorance, which is the concealer of the ego-delimited consciousness, can possibly be the material cause of the dream, and its [the ignorance's] cessation is possible when one awakes (*jāgrad-bodha*) without cognition of Brahman. The consciousness reflected in ignorance, or the Īśvara's consciousness as the source (*bimba*), is called consciousness non-delimited by ego (2). If it is considered the substratum of the dream, then the material cause of the dream state will have to be primordial ignorance, which is the concealer of the consciousness. But then, instead of considering its cessation in the form of negation due to awaking, it will have to be considered in the form of dissolution in the material cause. Alternatively, just as was stated in the description of the reflection-superimposition,⁵²⁸ if awaking is considered to be an

⁵²⁸ VP 8.51-52, discussed in section 8.1.4, on pp. 267-269.

opposing cognition, the cessation of the dream-superimposition can be considered to be caused by waking. But the cessation of the portion of ignorance that is the cause of concealment is not brought about by an opposing cognition; instead, there is the cessation only of the portion of ignorance that is the cause of projection. If the cessation of ignorance without remainder were said to be brought about by an opposing cognition, then in the case of the cessation of the snake-cognition by the stick-cognition, on account of the absence of the material cause, the erroneous cognition of the stick itself will not be possible, because, if in this case the cessation of the projection portion, too, were to occur without remainder, then the stick would also be only a projection, and therefore, its attainment (*upalambha*) should not occur. And so, it is appropriate to consider that in one instance of ignorance there is endless power that is the cause for endless projections, but only the power that is the cause of one projection is destroyed by an opposing cognition, and the power that is the cause of other projections remains. Thus at another time, superimposition again can reoccur in that very substratum. In this manner, even upon the negation of past dreams having been brought about by awaking, on account of the power that is the cause of projections in the form of future dreams being left remaining, dream-superimposition occurs again on another day. Therefore, it is also possible for consciousness non-delimited by ego (2) to be the substratum of dream.

But even accepting consciousness non-delimited by ego as the substratum of dreams, only the consciousness located inside the body can possibly be the substratum. If consciousness located outside the body were also to be considered the substratum, then, just as every pot, etc., is visible to all, and there is the need for the functioning (*vyāpāra*) of the senses in the immediate perception of the snake, silver, etc., in the same manner there also ought to be the need for the functioning of the senses in the immediate perception of a dream.⁵²⁹ But if the dream-superimposition is considered to occur in the consciousness located inside the body, then, on account of consciousness being related to the cognizer (*pramātā*), just as happiness, etc., are immediately cognized without the functioning of the senses, similarly it is possible for the dream-superimposition to be immediately cognized without the functioning of the senses (*VP* 8.60-5, 385-7).

⁵²⁹ Nīścaldās does not take up the argument that, if non-delimited consciousness were the substratum of dreams then the dreams of one person would be visible to all, presumably because his focus is to prove that the senses do not focus when dreaming.

In defense of the appropriateness of the substratum of dream being the consciousness that is located within the body and not delimited by the ego, Nīścaldās suggests the following. If consciousness non-delimited by ego is said to be the substratum of dream, it is of two kinds. Both a) the *jīva*-consciousness as the reflection in ignorance, and b) Īśvara-consciousness as the source in ignorance, are non-delimited by ego, and, on account of being pervasive (*vyāpaka*), both can be said to be within the body. The difference between the source and reflection is not natural; it is not possible for just one consciousness located within the body to be the basis of two opposing properties. Thus, the state of being Īśvara or *jīva* as the source or reflection is caused by an *upādhi*, and, in just one consciousness, the fact of being a source or reflection by relation to ignorance is imagined. Hence, there occurs the two-fold functioning of being either a source or a reflection in one consciousness located within the body. If the *antaḥ-karaṇa* is considered to be the delimiter (*avacchedaka*) of the state of being the substratum of dream-superimposition in the one consciousness located inside the body, then the state of being a substratum (*adhiṣṭhānatā*) is established in the ego-delimited consciousness (1). If the *antaḥ-karaṇa* is not considered to be the delimiter of that state of being a substratum, then the state of being a substratum is established in the consciousness non-delimited by ego (2). With regard to one and the same Devadatta, if he is referred to from the standpoint of his son, he is called a father, and if he is referred to from the standpoint of Devadatta's parents, then he is called a son. Similar to the operation of the opposed properties, 'father' and 'son,' in one and the same Devadatta, due to the difference in standpoints of reference (*vivakṣā-bheda*), it is possible for the opposed properties of ego-delimited-ness and ego-non-delimited-ness, as well as being a source or reflection to function in one and the same consciousness located in the body. Even so, it is proper to accept the substratum-ness of dreams only in inner consciousness located in the body (*VP* 8.66, 388).

Moreover, if the substratum-ness of dream is said to be in consciousness located in an extraordinary location which is either inside or outside (*bāhyāntar-asādhāraṇa-deśa-stha*), then it will oppose the words of Gauḍapāda and Śaṅkara. In the *vaitathya-prakaraṇa* of the *Māṇḍūkya-kārikā*, Gauḍapāda has said: "On account of the absence of suitable place and time for the creation of the elephant, mountain, etc. in a dream, the dream objects are false

(*mithyā*).⁵³⁰ Also, Śaṅkara, in his commentary on Gauḍapāda's statement, stated, "the creation of an empirical elephant, mountain, etc., in an instant and within the subtle nerves (*nāḍī*)⁵³¹ is not possible;"⁵³² therefore, the dream objects are unreal (*vitatha*). Thus, they too have spoken of the arising of the dream within the body itself. If the substratum-ness is considered to be within ordinary consciousness, then their statements that the dream arises in the subtle location will be improper. Therefore, the dream-superimposition should be considered to occur in consciousness non-delimited by ego inside the body (*VP* 8.67,388-9).

8.2.2 The Immediacy of the Dream Superimposition

Both the source (*bimba*) and reflection in ignorance (*avidyā-pratibimba*) are also consciousness non-delimited by ego. According to differing opinions, both can be the substratum of dream. Nevertheless, it is only proper to consider *jīva*-consciousness in the form of a reflection in ignorance as the substratum of dreams because immediate (*aparokṣa*) superimposition can only occur in an immediate substratum. Like pure Brahman, the cognition of Īśvara-consciousness also occurs only in mediate form by means of the *śāstras* alone. If Īśvara-consciousness were considered to be the substratum of dream, then, on account of the absence of immediacy of the substratum, the immediacy of the superimposition would not be possible. The *jīva*-consciousness, in the form of a reflection in ignorance becoming delimited by ego, is the object of the *vṛtti* in the form of "I" (*aham-ākāra vṛtti*). Although the *jīva*-consciousness, in the form of a reflection in ignorance non-delimited by ego, is not the object of the *aham-ākāra vṛtti*, nevertheless is not concealed, and therefore, because of it being immediate itself, immediate superimposition is possible on it (*VP* 8.68,389).

In the *Samkṣepa-śārīraka*, a three-fold immediacy of the substratum has been accepted in order to provide for the immediacy of the superimposition: 1) the immediacy of the rope, mother-of-pearl, etc., which is useful to the immediacy of the snake, silver, etc., superimpositions, is produced by the senses;⁵³³ 2) the immediacy of space, useful to the

⁵³⁰ This is an abridgement of *MāKā* 2.1-3

⁵³¹ "It is said in the Scriptures that the mind moves about during the time of sleep along some nerves and this produces the dream experience." (Gauḍapāda and Śaṅkarācārya 1955, 87n6)

⁵³² *MāKā* 2.1 *ŚBh*: "na hy antaḥ saṁvṛte dehāntar nāḍīṣu parvata-hasty-ādinām sambhavo 'sti" (Śaṅkara and Ānandagiri 1979, 253). The "in an instant" has been inserted by Nīścaldās here, the idea occurs in the *ŚBh* for the next verse, *MāKā* 2.2

⁵³³ *SS* 1.41, 2.52

immediacy of the superimposition of blueness, etc., occurs via the mind;⁵³⁴ and 3) the immediacy of the substratum, useful to the immediacy of the dream-superimposition, is innate (*svabhāva-siddha*). Sarvajñātman has spoken of dream-superimposition in the self that is immediate (*svataḥ aparokṣa*) in this manner in the *Samkṣepa-śārīraka*;⁵³⁵ therefore, the *jīva*-consciousness alone is the substratum of dream (*VP* 8.69, 389-90).

Nīścaldās raises a potential shortcoming (*āpatti*) with the above view. “If the nature of the *jīva*-consciousness, on account of being unconcealed, is considered to be self-illuminated (*svataḥ-prakāśa*), then, due to ignorance being pervasive, the *jīva*-consciousness reflected in it will also be pervasive, and therefore, it should always be in relation with pots, etc. In such a state, the immediate cognition of the pots, etc., should occur without the need of a *vr̥tti* produced by the eyes. If the need of a *vr̥tti* is accepted even in the immediate cognition of that which is related to the *jīva*-consciousness, then it will be improper (*asaṅgata*) to speak of the immediate cognition of dream-superimposition by means of the *jīva*-consciousness, which itself is immediate (*svataḥ aparokṣa*).” Nevertheless, the substratum of the dream-superimposition is the *jīva*-consciousness alone, but the substratum of the pot, etc., is not *jīva*-consciousness, it is Brahman-consciousness. Therefore, the objects of the dream have an identity-relation with their own substratum, which is *jīva*-consciousness, whereas the substratum of the pots, etc., being Brahman-consciousness, their identity relation is with Brahman-consciousness, not with *jīva*-consciousness. A relation of the *jīva*-consciousness with the pots, etc., arises only through a *vr̥tti* produced by the eyes, etc., and therefore, in the time before the [production of the] *vr̥tti*, the relation that the *jīva*-consciousness has with the pots, etc., does not produce (*sampādaka*) immediacy. The immediate cognition only arises from the requirement of a *vr̥tti*, which causes the different relation of the *jīva*-consciousness with the pot, etc. But in the dream-superimposition, due to the constant relation of the *jīva*-consciousness as substratum, the related objects are illumined without a *vr̥tti*. It has been stated in this manner by the teacher (*ācārya*) named Prakāśātma-śrīcaraṇa.⁵³⁶ (*VP* 8.70, 390).

⁵³⁴ *SŚ* 1.43

⁵³⁵ *SŚ* 1.42

⁵³⁶ Nīścaldās is alluding to Prakāśātman, the author of the *Vivaraṇa*, and his arguments in (Padmapādācārya et al. 1985, 308-9). Elsewhere (*VP* 3.18, 81), Nīścaldās explicitly associates Prakāśātma-śrīcaraṇa with the *Vivaraṇa*. I am uncertain as to why Nīścaldās specifically ascribes the view to *prakāśātma-śrīcaraṇa nāma ācārya*, since Śrīcaraṇa can also be used as an honorific, lit. “lotus feet,” particularly in the Vaishnava context, or “honorable feet [of the king]” (Sircar 1966, 317).

8.2.3 A Digression Unrelated to Dream State: The Perception of Space via *Vṛtti*

[In the process of arguing for the immediacy of dreams, Niścaldās stated that empirical objects have Brahman-consciousness as their substratum, and, in order to be perceived by the *jīva*-consciousness, a *vṛtti* is required to go out through the senses to such empirical objects. The *Samkṣepa-śārīraka* presented a three-fold immediacy of the superimposition, where the perception of space was said to occur via the mind. In connection with this, and unrelated to dreams, Niścaldās discusses a specific difference of opinion regarding the use of *vṛtti* in the perception of space]. In the above context (*prasaṅga*), in connection with space, the *vṛtti* is considered to be mental. In the *Advaita-dīpikā*, Nṛsiṃhāśrama has stated, “Although a *vṛtti* related to the eyes is not possible in connection with the formless space, sight (*āloka*) spread over space is possessed of form (*rūpa-vālā*), and the eye-*vṛtti* has the form of *āloka*. In the same manner that the cognizer (*pramātā*) is identical with the consciousness delimited by *āloka* by means of the eye-*vṛtti*, the *vṛtti* located in *āloka* is identical with consciousness delimited by space. Thus, due to the object of the eye-*vṛtti* being of the form of *āloka*, the immediate cognition of space has also been said to be caused by the eye sense organ.” But the purport of the mental immediate cognition of the sky that is mentioned in the *Samkṣepa-śārīraka* is as follows: “Space itself is formless; therefore, it is not possible for the eye-*vṛtti* to be of the form of space, and if the perception of another object located in the same place is accepted to occur by means of a *vṛtti* having a different form, then, by a *vṛtti* having the form of a pot, the perception of the pot’s smallness, depth and size should likewise occur. Also, by means of the *vṛtti* in the form of *āloka*, wind that is in the same place as the *āloka* should also be perceived by the eyes. Therefore, since the immediate cognition of space is not possible by means of the eye-*vṛtti*, only mental immediate perception is possible in connection with space.” If it is thought about carefully, although the immediate cognition of one [object] by a *vṛtti* in the form of another, in the manner of the *Advaita-dīpikā*, is not well known, and its acceptance is a defect [of Nṛsiṃhāśrama’s position], nevertheless, by accepting the immediate cognition of one [object] by a *vṛtti* in the form of another on the basis of the result (*phala-bala-taiṃ*) in some cases, the defect is removed. Similarly, the relation (*gocaratā*) of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* to external objects, in the manner of the *Samkṣepa-śārīraka*, is not known, and its acceptance is a defect. Nevertheless, if the relation of the *antaḥ-karaṇa vṛtti* to external objects assisted by the eye-*vṛtti* of another form (*anyākāra*), is accepted in some

cases on the basis of the result, then the defect in the form of the violation of the rule, “there is no relation of merely the *antaḥ-karaṇa* to external objects,” does not arise. Thus, although both versions are possible, only the *Advaita-dīpikā* view is correct because, according to the *Samkṣepa-śārīraka*, by accepting the eye-*vṛtti* in the form of *āloka* as an assisting cause, the *antaḥ-karaṇa* has to be additionally considered as an instrument (*karaṇa*) of immediate cognition pertaining to external objects, whereas, according to the *Advaita-dīpikā*, it is not required to accept the *antaḥ-karaṇa* as an instrument for the immediate cognition of external objects; therefore the view [by Nṛsiṃhāśrama] has economy (*lāghava*). Even if the eyes were not considered to assist, but only the *antaḥ-karaṇa* were considered the cause of perception of space, then the mental perception of space ought to occur even with closed eyes. Moreover, since the *antaḥ-karaṇa* is a material cause of cognition, to speak of its instrumentality is totally improper (*ayukta*). Thus, in speaking of the immediate cognition of space as mental, the *Samkṣepa-śārīraka* makes a *prauḍhi-vāda*, an extravagant assertion. It is only proper to say that the cause of the immediate cognition of superimposition, which is the immediate cognition of the substratum, occurs via the senses or via self-illumination. In other words, rather than considering the immediate cognition of the substratum as three-fold, as was said earlier,⁵³⁷ it should be considered as only two-fold (*VP* 8.71-2, 390-2).

8.2.4 The Self-immediacy of Dreams Confirmed by Scripture

Thus, given this difference of opinion, the material cause of a dream is said to be either secondary ignorance or primordial ignorance. But in all the views, the material cause of the superimpositions of snake, silver, etc., is considered to be secondary ignorance alone, and the cessation of the snake, etc., takes place through the cessation of ignorance by means of the cognition of the rope, etc. Here, the doubt may arise that once a rope has been cognized, due to the absence of the material cause, the erroneous cognition of a snake should not occur at another time. The resolution of this doubt is undertaken by Nīścaldās under the description of the purpose of the *vṛtti* in *VP* 8.145-161⁵³⁸ (*VP* 8.73, 392).

The immediate cognition of a dream by means of the self-immediacy of its substratum was mentioned earlier. In the *svayaṃ-jyotir brāhmaṇa* [*BU* 4.3] also, in connection with

⁵³⁷ In *VP* 8.69, 389-90.

⁵³⁸ Discussed in section 9.2, “The purpose of a *vṛtti*,” p. 328.

dreams it is stated, “*atrāyaṃ puruṣaḥ svayaṃjyotir bhavati*, here [in the dream] this person is self-illuminated” (*BU* 4.3.9). Its purport is that although *ātmā* is said to be self-illuminated in all three states, that which is self-illuminated is in its own illumination, independent of any other illumination, and illumines all. According to this definition, in the waking state, the *ātmā* is not self-illuminated, due to the presence of other illuminators such as the sun, eyes, etc. In the deep sleep state, the embodied seer (*sthūla-darśī*) does not perceive anything, and therefore, the Naiyāyikas consider general cognition (*jñāna-sāmānya*) to be absent in deep sleep. Therefore, here too, the self-effulgence of *ātmā* is not ascertained (*nirdhāra*). Since there is no other source of illumination to be found in the dream state apart from the self-effulgent *ātmā*, which can be considered the illuminator of the dream creation, *śruti* (scripture) has termed the *ātmā* as self-illuminated only in the dream state. If the eyes and other senses were involved even in the dream state, then on account of the absence of the independence (*nirapekṣatā*) from other illumination in dreams as well, it would not be possible to assign self-effulgence to *ātmā*. But the *ātmā* is self-illuminated in a dream, without the functioning of the senses. Although in a dream one wanders about with a staff in hand, beating camels, buffalos, etc., and seeing mangoes, etc., with the eyes, the centers (*golaka*) for the hands, eyes, and feet appear still. Therefore, the empirical senses do not function in dreams, and illusory senses are not accepted either. If illusory senses were to be accepted in dreams then *śruti*, which posits that *ātmā* is self-effulgent due to the absence of other sources of illumination,⁵³⁹ would be negated. Although illusory senses in the dream have been spoken of in the *VS*,⁵⁴⁰ that was an extravagant assertion (*prauḍhi-vāda*) [i.e., accepting the opponent’s view in order to justify one’s own better teaching].⁵⁴¹ Even if illusory senses are accepted in dreams, then on account of their arising at the same time as the cognition, it is not possible for them to be means of cognition. Also, the *antaḥ-karaṇa* alone, without the functioning of the senses, cannot be a means of cognition. According to the *Tattva-dīpikā*,⁵⁴² the *antaḥ-karaṇa* in dream transforms into the form of elephant, etc., and thus, cannot possibly be a

⁵³⁹ *BU* 4.3.9, quoted above.

⁵⁴⁰ In *VS* 6.306, 186, Nīścaldās writes: “In the dream, the senses, like the elephant, etc., are also imagined. *hasti ādikan kī nyānī svapna maiṇi kalpita indriya bī haiṇ.*”

⁵⁴¹ The parenthetical explanation of *prauḍhi-vāda* is provided by Ātmānand Muni: *arthāt pūrva-vādī kī ukti māṅkar apnā utkarṣa bodhanārtha hī vah samādhān hai* (Nīścaldās 1957, 550).

⁵⁴² There are multiple texts by this name. *Citsukhī* is also known as *Tattva-dīpikā* or *Tattva-pradīpikā*, as is the commentary on Vidyāraṇya’s *PD* by Rāmakṛṣṇa, among others. The reference here is to *Citsukhī* 1.3, which establishes the self-effulgence (*svaprakāśatā*) of *ātmā* (Citsukha, Pratyakṣvarūpa, and Yogīndrānanda 1956, 38-46).

means of cognition of the dream; therefore, a dream is illumined by *ātmā* (*ātma-prakāśa*), without the functioning of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* [or the senses]. Thus, the immediate cognition of the dream occurs by means of the self-immediate *ātmā*. In the dream, the elephants, etc., being seen by the eyes (*cākṣuṣatā*) that is perceived is also a superimposition, as are the elephants, etc. In the waking state, the perception of the pots, etc., being seen by the eyes is empirical, and the perception of snake, silver, etc., [being seen by the eyes] is illusory on account of being superimposed (*VP* 7.74-5, 392-3).

8.3 Reality (*Sattā*) and Illusoriness (*Mithyātvā*)

Self-effulgence need not be restricted to the dream state alone, and some Advaita thinkers extend it to all objects perceived in the empirical state. To explore this, Nīścaldās takes up the theory that perception is creation (*dr̥ṣṭi-sṛṣṭi-vāda*).

8.3.1 The Theories of *Dr̥ṣṭi-sṛṣṭi* (Perception is Creation) and *Sṛṣṭi-dr̥ṣṭi* (Creation Precedes Perception)

In the *dr̥ṣṭi-sṛṣṭi* (perception is creation) view, non-*ātmā* objects have no reality when uncognized (*ajñāta-sattā*); they only have reality when cognized (*jñāta-sattā*). Therefore, like the snake [perceived] in a rope, as long as non-*ātmā* objects are only revealed by the witness consciousness (*sākṣī-bhāṣya*), their apprehension as objects of cognition produced by the senses is also superimposed. There are two types of *dr̥ṣṭi-sṛṣṭi-vāda*. 1) In the [*Vedānta*-]*Siddhānta-muktāvalī* and other texts it is said that perception (*dr̥ṣṭi*), i.e., cognition itself (*jñāna-svarūpa*) is creation (*sṛṣṭi*) [*dr̥ṣṭir eva sṛṣṭiḥ*]. There is no creation separate from cognition. 2) But in the primary source texts (*ākara-grantha*), it is said that the creation of a non-*ātmā* object takes place at the time of cognition of perception, and that prior to cognition there is no non-*ātmā* object [*dr̥ṣṭi-samakālīnā sṛṣṭiḥ*]. Therefore, everything seen has reality when cognized (*jñāta-sattā*) alone, and not when uncognized (*ajñāta-sattā*).⁵⁴³ These are two kinds of *dr̥ṣṭi-sṛṣṭi-vāda* which are accepted (*abhimata*) by all Advaita *śāstras* (*VP* 8.76, 393-4).⁵⁴⁴

⁵⁴³ Ātmānand Muni adds, “To consider reality of an object prior to cognition is called *ajñāta-sattā*, reality when uncognized, or empirical reality. To not consider reality of an object prior to cognition but only to accept its reality at the same time as its cognition is called *jñāta-sattā*, reality when cognized, or illusory reality” (Nīścaldās 1957, 551).

⁵⁴⁴ In *VS* (2.81, 45), Nīścaldās states that *dr̥ṣṭi-sṛṣṭi-vāda* is the Vedānta doctrine, *siddhānta*, and describes it in great detail at *VS* 6.317-29, 193-203. In fact, *VS* 6.328 is titled “The acceptance (*aṅgikāra*) of *dr̥ṣṭi-sṛṣṭi-vāda*.”

Many authors have described *sṛṣṭi-drṣṭi-vāda*, the view that creation is perceived, in the manner of persons of unrefined vision (*sthūla-darśī*). First, creation occurs, and then subsequently, by relation with a means of cognition (*pramāṇa*), perception takes place. The meaning of *sṛṣṭi-drṣṭi* is that perception occurs after creation. In this view, non-*ātmā* objects have uncognized reality, and, unlike snake, silver, etc., the non-*ātmā* pot, etc., are held to have empirical reality. In *drṣṭi-sṛṣṭi-vāda*, no non-*ātmā* object is an object of a means of cognition. Only pure Brahman is the object of verbal means of cognition (*śabda pramāṇa*) in the form of Vedānta. All inert objects are revealed by the witness-self. The apprehension of an object's perception by eyes, etc., is erroneous because even the division of means of cognition and cognizer (*pramāṇa-prameya-vibhāga*) are superimposed like [in] a dream. In contrast, in *sṛṣṭi-drṣṭi-vāda*, all pots and other non-*ātmā* objects are objects of the means of cognition, and even the teacher, *śāstras*, etc., are empirical, and different from the erroneously cognized snake, silver, etc. Although the use of empirical silver as a chain/bracelet, etc., is known, and such use of the illusory versions is not known, nevertheless the cessation of both through cognition of the substratum is similar, both are *anirvacanīya*, different from real and unreal, and the absence of both in their own substratum (*svādhikaraṇa*) in all three times [past, present, future] is similar. Therefore, like illusory objects, empirical objects too are only unreal (*mithyā*). Thus, even in *sṛṣṭi-drṣṭi-vāda*, there is no damage (*hāni*) to non-duality, Advaita (*VP* 8.77, 394).

8.3.2 The Illusoriness of the Unreal Creation

Nīścaldās raises a doubt on behalf of the dualists in connection with these two theories. “In both *drṣṭi-sṛṣṭi-vāda* and *sṛṣṭi-drṣṭi-vāda*, all non-*ātmā* objects are unreal. There is no debate regarding this, but a question arises regarding the property of being illusory (*mithyātva*) which is possessed by unreal objects. Is this property (of being unreal) 1) real; or 2) unreal? If it be said to be real (1), the Advaita position will be harmed since there is reality in a non-*ātmā* property that is different from consciousness. If it be said to be unreal (2), then, too, there will be harm to the Advaita position since an unreal object is not an opposer (*pratikṣepaka*) to an object opposed to it, and therefore the reality of creation (*prapañca*) will

not be repudiated by the unreal (*mithyā-bhūta*)⁵⁴⁵ property of being illusory (*mithyātva*). The properties of being with manifestation (*saprapañcatva*) and being without manifestation (*niṣprapañcatva*) reside in Brahman; the property of being with manifestation is imaginary (*kalpita*), and that of being without manifestation is ultimate (*pāramārthika*). Thus, although Brahman possesses both of these properties, the property of being without manifestation is not repudiated by the unreal property of being with manifestation. Similarly, in the creation, the property of illusory is imaginary and the property of reality (*satyatva*) is ultimate; therefore, by the existence of the ultimate property of reality in the creation, the Advaita position will be harmed” (*VP* 7.78, 394-5).

This objection is resolved by the *Advaita-dīpikā* as follows. The reality that is apprehended in a pot, etc., as in “the pot is real,” is the reality of the substratum itself that appears in the pot, etc. Or, an *anirvacanīya* relation arises between the pot, etc., and the reality of the substratum. The pot’s property of illusoriness (*mithyātva*), which is different from real and unreal, is known through *śruti* (scripture). Illusoriness is different from real (*sat*); therefore, it is opposed to reality (*satyatva*), which is different from unreal (*asat*), and that reality is repudiated by this illusoriness. The dualists might argue, “It is not possible to repudiate the reality of creation by the unreal* (*mithyā-bhūta*) illusoriness without accepting reality in the property of illusoriness. If an unreal* property could bring about the repudiation of its opposing property, then even Brahman’s property of being without manifestation should be repudiated by the unreal* property of being with manifestation.” This [argument of the dualist] is also improper because it is a rule that a property repudiates an opposing property of a property-possessor (*dharmin*) of the same reality [as the property], but where the property-possessor has a different reality, its opposing property is not repudiated. The property of Brahman’s being with manifestation is empirical, and Brahman is ultimate; therefore, the property possessor, Brahman, is not of the same reality as the property of being with manifestation, and so that property cannot repudiate Brahman’s property of being without manifestation. But in the empirical creation, illusoriness is also empirical because the empirical creation free from adventitious (*āgantuka*) defects is only produced by ignorance,

⁵⁴⁵ The term *mithyā-bhūta* is challenging to translate without causing further confusion. I choose to render it as “unreal” and then either provide the Sanskrit original in parentheses as “unreal (*mithyā-bhūta*)” or, in the cases where this gets too cumbersome, as “unreal*” so as to be able to distinguish it from “unreal (*asat*).”

and is illusory (*mithyā*). Therefore, since creation and illusoriness are both empirical, and thus of the same reality, the reality of creation can readily be repudiated by illusoriness. If only a real property is accepted as capable of repudiating an opposing property, then for one who apprehends reality in the silver in mother-of-pearl as “the silver is real,” the illusoriness of silver should not repudiate that reality because the property of illusoriness in the imagined silver is also only imagined and not real. Hence, the reality of the repudiating property is not required in the repudiation of an opposing property, but only that the property possessor of the opposing property be of the same order of reality as the repudiating property. Thus, the defect simply does not arise, that Brahman’s property of being without manifestation is repudiated by its property of being with manifestation; the repudiation of the [empirical] reality of creation by the empirical illusoriness of creation is possible (*VP* 7.79, 395-6).

The dualists raise another type of objection. “If the property of illusoriness (*mithyātva*) in creation is considered illusory (*mithyā*), the ultimate reality of creation is still not repudiated since only properties at the same [level of] reality oppose one another; properties at different levels of reality do not oppose one another. If properties of different levels of reality could also be in opposition, then the identity (*tādātmya*) of the illusory (*prātibhāsika*) silver with mother-of-pearl should also repudiate the difference [of mother-of-pearl] from empirical real silver. Since the empirical illusoriness of creation is unable to repudiate the ultimate reality of creation, creation is real, and Advaita, non-duality, is not possible.” Nīścaldās’s response is that even this doubt has the resolution stated before. The reality of snake, silver, etc., should not be repudiated by the illusoriness of the illusory snake, silver, etc. Therefore, a property that is ascertained by a means of valid cognition alone is the cause (*prayojaka*) for the repudiation of an opposing property. The illusoriness of silver in mother-of-pearl is ascertained by a means of valid cognition, and this illusoriness repudiates (*pratikṣepa*) its opposing property of reality. Similarly, the illusoriness of creation is also ascertained by a means of cognition such as *śruti* (scripture), etc., and it repudiates the reality of creation. But in the mother-of-pearl, the identity of illusory silver is not ascertained by a means of cognition, rather, it is established by erroneous cognition, and therefore, it does not repudiate the difference from empirical silver. On the contrary, the difference of silver from mother-of-pearl is itself ascertained by a means of cognition, and it repudiates the identity of silver with mother-of-pearl. The dualist has accepted the illusoriness of creation as empirical, and

thereby the ascription of being ultimately real (*pāramārthika*) to its property-possessor (*dharmin*), the creation, is totally contrary (*sarvathā viruddha*) because the only possible substratum of an empirical property is an empirical property-possessor. Thus, even the second objection of the dualists is improper (*VP* 8.80-1, 396-7).

When, in the manner of the *Advaita-dīpikā*, the property-possessor (*dharmin*) is of the same [level of] reality as the contradicting property (*dharma*), then the contradicting property repudiates its opposing property. On accepting this rule, the unreal* (*mithyā bhūta*) illusoriness (*mithyātva*) of creation repudiates the reality of creation, and Brahman's being without manifestation is not repudiated by its being with manifestation. But the *Advaita-dīpikā* resolution can only be possible by accepting differences in reality (*sattā-bheda*). Against this, if only one reality is accepted, in the manner of "there is only the reality as Brahman which appears in the pot, etc., and there is no [other] different reality in empirical or illusory objects," then this resolution is not possible. Nīscaldās presents his own solution to this objection. Although a property ascertained by a valid means of cognition repudiates an opposing property, yet, in the case where other properties are ascertained by a valid means of cognition, there the other property is not contradicted. For example, the illusoriness of creation is ascertained by a valid means of cognition such as *śruti* (scripture), etc., and there is no *śruti* as a means of cognition for the reality of creation. On the contrary, only the absence of reality is known through *śruti*. Therefore, the illusoriness of creation negates its own reality. Although reality is apprehended in creation by the perceptual means of cognition, such as in the assertion, "the pot is real," human perception is weaker than *śruti* statements which do not originate with humans (*apauruṣeya*), and thus, the reality of creation cannot be said to be established by a means of cognition. Brahman's being with manifestation and being without manifestation (*saprapañcatva niṣprapañcatva*) are both established by means of cognition; therefore, one property should not be negated by the other. But the highest human goal, i.e., liberation (*parama puruṣārtha*), is attained only by the cognition of [Brahman's] being without manifestation. Therefore, the goal (*tātparya*) of *śruti* is the setting forth (*pratipādana*) of being without manifestation. The description of Brahman's being with manifestation is useful for the understanding (*bodha*) of non-dual Brahman without manifestation, but the actual goal of *śruti* is not to describe being with manifestation; hence, being with manifestation is not ultimate but is merely conceived. But it

is not illusory either, having been produced by ignorance free from adventitious defects; [therefore] it is empirical, and thus the negation of being with manifestation by being without manifestation is established. By stating that the intention of *śruti* statements promoting the being with manifestation is solely for empirical being with manifestation, being with manifestation is restricted. Also, Brahman's being with manifestation is not eternal; it is only present in the time of ignorance prior to knowledge (*vidyā*), and therefore, the property of being with manifestation is negated by the property of being without manifestation, whereas the converse is not possible. Thus, the objection of the dualist is improper (*VP* 8.82-3, 397-8).

Authors other than Nṛsiṃhāśrama have resolved the above objection [against the *Advaita-dīpikā* view] in the following manner. Pertaining to its own substratum (*svāśraya-gocara*), the property that is not negated by the immediate perception of truth (*tattva*) repudiates its opposing property, but the property that, pertaining to its own substratum, is negated by the immediate perception of truth, cannot repudiate its opposing property. For example, creation (*prapañca*) is the substratum of illusoriness (*mithyātva*). The illusoriness of creation is not negated by the immediate perception of the truth pertaining to Brahman, which is the substratum of the creation. Instead, the conviction of illusoriness (*mithyātvabuddhi*) pertaining to creation becomes firmer by the immediate perception of Brahman. Hence, the opposing [property of creation's] reality is repudiated by the illusoriness of creation. But Brahman is the substratum of the property of being with manifestation. The property of being with manifestation is negated by the immediate perception of Brahman; therefore, the property of being with manifestation does not cancel (*tiraskāra*) Brahman's property of being without manifestation. Just as mother-of-pearl has its own identity (*tādātmya*), the imagined silver also has its identity in its substratum, mother-of-pearl. The mother-of-pearl-identity is not negated by the immediate perception of mother-of-pearl, but the difference from mother-of-pearl that opposes mother-of-pearl is repudiated by the mother-of-pearl-identity. Also, by the immediate perception of mother-of-pearl, the identity of silver in mother-of-pearl gets negated, but that identity of silver [in mother-of-pearl] does not repudiate the difference-from-silver that opposes the silver [which is falsely perceived in mother-of-pearl]. Similarly, the property of reality gets repudiated by the creation's *unreal (*mithyā bhūta*) property of illusoriness, but Brahman's property of being without

manifestation does not get repudiated by its property of being with manifestation (*VP* 8.84, 398-9).

Thus, there are several resolutions to the dualists' objections. Niścaldās suggests that the seeker of knowledge (*jijñāsu*) should stay away from the dualists' ideas.⁵⁴⁶

8.3.3 Five Repudiations of the Reality of the Visible World (*Prapañca*)

Niścaldās provides five different ways in which the reality of the visible world is negated by its illusoriness (*mithyātva*):

According to the author of the *Tattva-śuddhi*,⁵⁴⁷ the object of the perceptual cognition "the pot is real," etc., is the substratum of the pot, etc., namely, consciousness, whose nature is real (*sat-svarūpa cetana*). The pot, etc., superimposed on the real-by-nature consciousness, become identical with their substratum and become the objects of a *vr̥tti* pertaining to an erroneous cognition (*bhrama-vr̥tti*). For example, the mother-of-pearl, rope, etc., are objects of the *vr̥tti* from the eyes (*cākṣuṣa-vr̥tti*) in the form of 'this' (*idam-ākāra*), but the snake, silver, etc., are not objects of any *vr̥tti* from the eyes but are the objects of a *bhrama-vr̥tti*. Similarly, the object of all cognitions produced by the means of cognition such as eyes, etc., is only the reality in the form of the substratum; the *vr̥tti* produced by the means of cognition does not pertain to the pot, etc. The means of cognition pertain only to that which is not cognized. [Therefore, the uncognized-ness can reside only in the substratum, which is consciousness, and the concealment caused by ignorance is possible in that consciousness alone].⁵⁴⁸ In contrast, the inert objects such as pot, etc., [are devoid of reality and,] because of the absence of uncognized-ness in them, and because of the impossibility of their being concealed by ignorance, the means of cognition cannot pertain to these inert objects. [There is just one real entity (*vastu*), and that is the object of concealment. A non-real entity, being devoid of its own reality, is itself the form of concealment, so how can it be the object of concealment?] Therefore, the pot, etc., like the snake, silver, etc., are the objects of erroneous cognition, and only their substratum, the real-by-nature consciousness, is the object of the

⁵⁴⁶ Lit. "should remain turned away (*vimukha*) from the dualists' words (*vacana*).

⁵⁴⁷ Jñānaghana, 950-1050 CE. See also Jñānaghana-pāda (1941, ix). The illusoriness of creation is treated in two sections titled *prapañca-mithyātva-nirūpaṇam* and *saṃsāra-mithyātvam*, Jñānaghana-pāda (1941, 98-104, 192-8). Niścaldās's arguments presented here are along the lines of the second section, though arguments similar to those presented in the first section have also been used by Niścaldās elsewhere.

⁵⁴⁸ This helpful comment, as well as others in this section that are provided in square-brackets are only in Ātmānand Muni's version, (Niścaldās 1957, 559-60).

vr̥tti produced by the eyes and the other means of cognition. In this manner, the object of all means of cognition is simply the real-by-nature consciousness, whereas the endless difference-qualified pot, etc., are apprehended as erroneous cognitions in that consciousness, and as such, the reality in pot, etc., is not the object of any means of cognition. Therefore, several *śruti-smṛti* (scriptural texts) reiterate (*anuvāda*) the illusoriness (*mithyātvā*) of the pot, etc. The author of the *Tattva-śuddhi* has explained, in this manner, that the means of cognition such as the eyes, etc., pertain to the reality of the substratum alone, not the pot, etc., and has thus repudiated the reality of creation (*VP* 8.85, 399-400).

- 1) Some other authors write that, although the object of the apprehension “the pot is,” etc., is the reality (*sattva*) of the pot, etc., nevertheless, according to *śruti* (scripture), reasoning (*yukti*) and the experience of those who know (*jñānī*), the pot, etc., possess illusoriness. There, illusoriness is opposed by non-negated (*abādhita*) reality, which means that the pot, etc., have reality in the form of a class (*jāti*). Just as all pots have the consequent (*anugata*) property of pot-ness, similarly in the case of the object of the uniform (*ekākāra*) apprehension, “the pot is, the cloth is,” this property (*dharma*) that is in all objects in the form of a consequent class, is itself the reality. Alternatively, the apprehension of pot, etc., does not occur without the relation of time and place; only the pot, etc., qualified by time and place are apprehended, i.e., the apprehension related to the pot, etc., takes place as “there is a pot here, there is a pot now,” with just the time and place relations as the object, and these relations themselves are the reality in the pot, etc. Alternatively, the object of the apprehension, “the pot is,” is just the form and nature of the pot, etc.; this apprehension does not make the reality of the pot, etc., a separate object. The object that is apprehended by a sentence without the word ‘not’ is negated (*niṣedha*) by the word ‘not.’ Therefore, the sentence “the pot is not” only negates the form of the pot. Since this is consented to by all, it is best to accept just the knowing (*bodha*) of the pot by the sentence without the word ‘not,’ i.e., “the pot is.” In this manner, since all objects like the pot, etc., have reality only in the nature (*svarūpa*) of the class, or qualified by time and place, or as form, due to the absence of reality separate from their nature, they are only illusory (*mithyā*) (*VP* 8.86, 400).

- 2) In the view of the author of the *Nyāya-sudhā*,⁵⁴⁹ the object of the apprehension “the pot is” is only the pot, etc.’s relation of being (*sattā*) present in the substratum. According to the author of the *Tattva-śuddhi*, an apprehension produced by means of cognition does not pertain to non-*ātmā* pot, etc., but to the being of the substratum alone. The *Nyāya-sudhā* view only has the difference that the pot, etc., qualified by the relation with the substratum’s being have been considered the objects of apprehension generated by means of cognition. Thus, reality is apprehended in the pot, etc., by the relation of the substratum’s being, but actually the reality is absent in the pot, etc. The acceptance of the apprehension of the substratum’s being in the pot, etc., is an acceptance of *anyathā-khyāti*; therefore, it is best to consider that an *anirvacanīya* relation to the substratum’s being arises in the pot, etc. (*VP* 8.87, 400-1).
- 3) Some teacher⁵⁵⁰ asserts that the *śruti* states “*prāṇā vai satyaṃ teṣāṃ eṣaḥ satyam*, the breath [vital functions] is the real; he is the real underlying [lit. of] that” (*BU* 2.3.6). Its meaning is that breath, i.e., *hiranyagarbha* is real, and, by its connection (*apekṣā*), the *paramātmā* is the highest real. There is also another *śruti*, “*satyasya satyam*, the real of the real” (*BU* 2.3.6, just preceding the previous phrase), which means that the reality of *ātmā* is superior to the reality of non-*ātmā*. Just as with regards to another king (*rājā*), the superior king is called the Mahārāja, similarly the superior real is called the real of the real. Thus, in *śruti* where the superiority-inferiority of the real has been stated, this is not possible in any other manner; the real can be superior or inferior only on the basis of being ever non-negated or being sometimes non-negated [respectively]. In non-*ātmā* objects, prior to cognition, there is reality in the form of being non-negated, and, in the ultimate entity, the reality is always present in the form of being non-negated; therefore, *hiranyagarbha* is the inferior real, and *paramātmā* is the superior real. In this manner the two-fold real is in concord with *śruti*. Of these realities, that which is of the form of being sometimes non-negated does not oppose illusoriness, but the reality that is always non-

⁵⁴⁹ Gauḍeśvara Jñānottama, also known as Satyānanda, 1100-1200 CE per Thangaswami (1980, 347), and 1175 CE by Potter (2006, 583) was the teacher of Citsukha. I have been unable to locate this text. It is not to be confused with two other texts of the same name, one by Someśvara [twelfth c. CE, a Mīmāṃsaka work, an interpretation of Kumāṛila’s thought (Verpoorten 1987, 38)] and the other by Jayatīrtha [1365-88 CE, a *dvaitin* commentary on Madhva’s *Anuvyākhyāna* on the *BS* (Sharma 1986, xviii-xix)].

⁵⁵⁰ “*koī ācārya*,” unnamed.

negated opposes illusoriness, and so it repudiates illusoriness of the creation (*VP* 8.88, 401).

- 4) In the *Samkṣepa-śārīraka*, it is stated that although the reality of pot, etc., is apprehended by the means of cognition such as perception, etc., only Brahman-revealing (lit. *bodhaka*) sentences are the means of cognition. The means of cognition such as perception, etc., that perceive (*grāhaka*) non-*ātmā* are not means of cognition but merely the appearance of a means of cognition (*pramāṇābhāsa*). A means of cognition is simply the producer of the understanding of [heretofore] unknown meaning, but it is not possible to have ignorance-caused concealment in inert objects [because inert objects are devoid of being and solely of the nature of concealment]. Therefore, it is not possible for perception, etc., that reveal inert objects, to be means of cognition because of the absence of unknowability (*ajñātatva*) in anything that is different from consciousness. [Ultimately, there is nothing that is different from consciousness, let alone knowable]. Thus, the reality is established in the pot, etc., by the appearance of a means of cognition, and their illusoriness is established by *śruti* as a means of cognition. Consequently, the reality of creation is repudiated by means of the negation of the appearance of means of cognition by the principal means of cognition, *śruti* (*VP* 8.89, 401-2).

In this manner, the contradiction of creation by the endless non-negatable reality has been stated in five ways; therefore, creation is illusory.

8.4 Utility of Acts (Karma) in Effecting Knowledge (*Jñāna*)

Given that the illusoriness of creation has been established, Nīścaldās takes up the means to dispel illusoriness. Nīścaldās states bluntly that there is no use for action in the cessation of an illusory (*mithyā*) entity. Therefore, it is not possible to effect the cessation of futility (*anartha*) by means of either action, or action along with knowledge. [Futility here refers to *saṃsāra*⁵⁵¹]. The cessation of illusoriness can be brought about only by knowledge. This sense is very well known in Advaita texts and even in the vernacular.⁵⁵² In this regard, the Advaita doctrine (*siddhānta*) is that, although several *śruti* and *smṛti* texts speak of the

⁵⁵¹ *Samśāra* is yet another word I choose to not translate. A few of the senses provided by *MW* should suffice to reveal the richness of this term: “course, passage, passing through a succession of states, circuit of mundane existence, transmigration, metempsychosis, the world, secular life, worldly illusion.”

⁵⁵² Nīścaldās refers to his own treatment of this topic in the sixth *tarāṅga* of *VS*. See *VS* 6. 376-99, 234-45.

attainment of liberation through knowledge combined with action, Śaṅkara has taught (*pratipādana*) the denial (*niṣedha*) of the theory of knowledge and action combined [to effect liberation] in several places. There, it has been ascertained that the combining (*samuccaya*) [of knowledge and action] is of two kinds: 1) simultaneous combination (*sama-samuccaya*); and 2) sequential combination (*krama-samuccaya*). Considering both knowledge and action as the means of liberation, combining them and practicing (*anuṣṭhāna*) both at the same time is termed simultaneous combination (1). For one and the same practitioner to first perform action only, and then later, through the renunciation of all action, to engage in listening (*śravaṇa*) [to scripture], etc.,⁵⁵³ for the purpose of knowledge is termed sequential combination (2). Of these two, simultaneous combination has been denied, and, wherever the combination of knowledge and action is described in *śruti* and *smṛti* texts, the purport is only the sequential combination stated above (*VP* 8.90, 402).

Śaṅkara's position (*siddhānta*) is that action is not the immediate (*sākṣāt*) means for liberation; knowledge is the only means, and action is the means to effect knowledge. According to Vācaspati, action is a means to bring about the desire of knowledge. In the *Bhāmatī*, Vācaspati writes that karma is not an immediate means of knowledge, but it is a means for the desire to know (*jijñāsā*). In the Kaivalya School (lit. *kaivalya-śākhā*),⁵⁵⁴ it has been clearly stated that all *āśrama-karmas*⁵⁵⁵ are the means for desire to know (*vividiṣā*).⁵⁵⁶ But the author of the *Brahma-sūtra* has stated in the third chapter [*BS* 3.4] the requirement of all actions [as necessary] for [attaining] knowledge alone. In his explanation of the *sūtras*,⁵⁵⁷ Śaṅkara says that control of the inner and outer senses (*śama-dama*), etc.,⁵⁵⁸ are the means of knowledge, and therefore, they are close to knowledge. By contrast, other actions are a

⁵⁵³ See the discussion on p. 60 to review what "listening (*śravaṇa*), etc." refer to.

⁵⁵⁴ It is unlikely that *kaivalya-śākhā* refers to the Kaivalyopaniṣad of the *AV*, as the only reference there to *āśrama* occurs in v. 5, where it is clearly referring to the last *āśrama*, i.e., *sannyāsa*. (In fact, v. 2cd is against action: "na karmaṇā na prajāyā dhanena tyāgenaike amṛtatvam ānaśuḥ. Not through action, nor through offspring or wealth, [rather] some attained immortality through renunciation"). In the context of n. 565, Nīscaldās refers to the *BU* as *kaivalya-śākhā*. If the *BU* is intended instead, then *BU* 4.4.22 is the verse. See also n. 585.

⁵⁵⁵ Actions done in all four *āśramas*, stages of life, namely, 1) *brahmacārī*, student, 2) *gṛhastha*, householder, 3) *vānaprasthī*, forest-dweller, and 4) *sannyāsī*, renunciate.

⁵⁵⁶ *Kaivalya Upaniṣad* 1.2 states: "tasmai sa hovāca pitāmahaś ca śraddhā-bhakti-dhyāna-yogād avaihi; na karmaṇā na prajāyā dhanena tyāgenaike amṛtatvam ānaśuḥ. [Paramēsthīn] said to him, know it by means of the practice of faith, devotion, and meditation. They [the wise] attained immortality neither by acts, nor by progeny, nor by wealth, but by renunciation."

⁵⁵⁷ Specifically, in the *parāmarśādhikaraṇam* (*BS* 3.4.18-20) on whether *śruti* prescribes renunciation.

⁵⁵⁸ This refers to the *ṣaṭ-sampatti*, the six-fold wealth: 1) *śama*, & 2) *dama*, self-control, 3) *uparati*, cessation of the senses, 4) *titikṣā*, forbearance, 5) *samādhāna*, contemplation, 6) *śraddhā*, faith. This is introduced in *BS ŚBh* 1.1.1 (Śāṅkarācārya et al. 1980, 36-7).

means for the desire to know, and, due to the need for *śama*, *dama*, etc., these other actions are distant from knowledge.⁵⁵⁹ Thus, through *śruti* and also the [Śaṅkara-] *bhāṣya*, action is the immediate means for the desire to know, and through the desire to know, [actions] are the means for knowledge. If it were said that actions are the immediate means for knowledge, the performance of action will be required until the dawning of knowledge, and then there will be the loss of the [requirement for] *sannyāsa* in the form of renunciation of action, and also the [loss of consequent] knowledge. Therefore, according to Vācaspati, action is only the means for the desire to know (*VP* 8.91-2, 403).

According to Prakāśātman, the author of the *Vivaraṇa*, action is a means for knowledge. Although *śruti* says, “*vedānuvacanena [brāhmaṇā] vividiṣanti*, [the brahmans] seek to know [Brahman] by Vedic recitation... (*BU* 4.4.22),” there, by the word-breaks (*akṣara-maryādā*) it appears that the study of Vedas and other actions are the means for the desire to know; nevertheless, the purport of *śruti* is that action is a means for the object of desire, i.e., knowledge alone, and not merely the means for the desire [to know]. Just as in the sentence, “he wishes to go by means of a horse,” it is seen from the word-breaks that the horses are the means for the desire pertaining to going. Also in “he wishes to kill by means of a weapon,” the means for the desire to kill is seen in the weapon. Just as for the object of the desire of going, its means is intended (*abhipreta*) to be the horse, and for the object of the desire of killing, its means is meant to be the weapon, similarly, for the object of desire for knowledge, its means is intended to be action. In this regard, Vācaspati has raised the defect that “if actions are considered the means of knowledge, due to the fault arising of the performance of action [being required] till the dawn of knowledge, there will be the loss of *sannyāsa*.” The [*Vivaraṇa*] resolution to this objection is that, just as the land is tilled (*karṣaṇa*) prior to the scattering of the seed, and, in the time subsequent to the planting of the seed, it is re-ploughed (*ākarṣaṇa*) [to cover the seeds], and thus the establishing (*siddhi*) of rice, etc., is done by the plowing and re-plowing, similarly, knowledge is established by action and renunciation (*sannyāsa*). Action is to be done only as long as the detachment (*vairāgya*) and

⁵⁵⁹ *BS ŚBh* 3.4.20: ... *śama-damādis tu tadīyo dharmo brahma-saṁsthatāyā upodbalako na virodhī*. Control of the inner & outer senses (*śama-dama*), etc., however, are [a renunciate’s] properties [and] strengthen one’s abiding in Brahman and are not in opposition. *brahmani śthatvam eva hi tasya śama-damādy upabr̥ṇhitaṁ svāśrama-vihitaṁ karma yajñādīni cetareṣāṁ tad vyatikrame ca tasya pratyavāyāḥ*. Just abiding in Brahman is the prescribed action for one’s *āśrama* [at the stage of renunciation], strengthened by *śama*, *dama*, etc., [whereas] acts and rituals [are the prescribed actions] for the other stages [and their performance] is improper (Śaṅkarācārya et al. 1980, 795).

strong desire to know the inner essence (*pratyak tattva*) have not arisen through the purification of the *antaḥ-karaṇa*. But once detachment and strong desire to know have arisen, only renunciation is to be performed in the form of the giving up of action along with the means. Thus, although actions are the means of knowledge, in the time subsequent to the strong desire to know, only the sections (*aṅga*) of renunciation (*sannyāsa*), the control of the inner and outer senses (*śama* and *dama*), etc., are to be performed, and not actions. Thus, the dependence on action does not oppose Śaṅkara's *bhāṣya* on the third chapter of the *BS*, which teaches the essentiality of *śama*, etc. Thus, in the *Vivaraṇa* view, actions are a means to knowledge, and in Vācaspati's view, they are a means to the desire to know. But in both views there is the performance of actions prior to [the arising of] the desire to know, and subsequently there is only the performance of *śama*, *dama*, etc., followed by listening to scriptures, etc., along with renunciation. After the [arising of] the desire to know, in neither view is action required to be done (*VP* 8.93, 403-4).

At this juncture a doubt may arise. If, in both the views, action is to be performed only prior to the desire to know, then stating the difference in the views is fruitless. But in Vācaspati's view, the result of actions is the desire to know, and in the *Vivaraṇa* view, the result is considered to be knowledge. Once the result has been achieved, then the means is renounced. Thus, if, in Vācaspati's view, it is accepted that the action is performed until the desire to know is established, and in the *Vivaraṇa* view, the action is performed even after the desire to know until knowledge is established, then a difference in the two views is possible. But according to what has been said, in both views, on accepting the renunciation of action after the desire to know, there is no difference between the two views (*VP* 8.94, 404-5).

Nīścaldās provides the following resolution. Although, in both views, action is performed only until the desire to know, there is a difference in the result of the action. In Vācaspati's view, the result is only the desire to know, and, after producing the desire to know, the unseen consequences of actions (*apūrva*) come to an end. Upon the desire to know occurring, if one has the benefit of the apparatus (*sāmagrī*) of knowledge, such as the best teacher, *śāstras*, etc., then knowledge occurs, but, if there is the lack of some apparatus, then knowledge does not occur. Essentially, the function of action is only in the arising of the desire to know and not in the arising of knowledge. Therefore, the result of action is not

knowledge. Thus, according to Vācaspati's view, even on performing an action which is the cause of the desire to know, knowledge is not attained as a rule, but, if by the best of fortune, the complete apparatus should become established, then alone does knowledge occur. Therefore, the attainment of knowledge by means of action is uncertain (*aniyata*). In contrast, in the *Vivaraṇa* view, prior to the desire for knowledge, the result of performed action also is knowledge, which means that the unseen consequences of actions (*apūrva*) do not get exhausted without producing knowledge. Instead, they remain until the arising of knowledge. Also, the apparatus without which the result of action, namely, knowledge, will not occur, all that entire apparatus is effected by action itself. In this version, on the performance of action having been carried out, knowledge will certainly occur in either the present body or in the future body; therefore, the arising of knowledge is certain. Thus, in Vācaspati's view, the desire to know occurs as a rule due to good (*śubha*) actions, but the achievement of knowledge is uncertain. In the *Vivaraṇa* view, the same action causes knowledge as a rule. Therefore, the two views are mutually different and not inter-mixed. In essence, whether action is the cause of the desire to know or of knowledge, according to both, the utility of *āśrama-karmas*, such as the study of the Vedas, sacrificial rituals (*yajña*), charity, and rites such as the *kṛcchra-cāndrāyaṇa*,⁵⁶⁰ etc., is only for knowledge (*vidyā*). However, some teachers say that the duties (*dharma*) carried out only as prescribed by one's caste (*varṇa*), are of no use for knowledge (*VP* 8.95-6, 405-6).

According to the author of the *Kalpataru*,⁵⁶¹ all obligatory actions (*nitya-karma*) are useful for knowledge (*vidyā*) because both the author of the *Brahma-sūtra* and Śaṅkara have stated the eligibility of people without an *āśrama* [the life stage] to perform actions for the purpose of knowledge, and also for engaging in listening [to Vedānta texts] (*śravaṇa*), etc. [i.e., reflection (*manana*) and profound and continuous meditation (*nididhyāsana*) on the content of these texts, also for the sake of knowledge]. Similarly, even *śruti* has spoken of the knowledge of Brahman in persons without an *āśrama*, such as Raikva [in *CU*:4.1-2, he is

⁵⁶⁰ *Kṛcchra-cāndrāyaṇa* is a difficult (*kṛcchra*) fast where the amount of food consumed is in proportion to the phase of the moon. The food consumed is decreased by a fixed fourteenth every day of the waning fortnight, until one consumes nothing on the new moon day. The food is then increased in like manner during the waxing fortnight.

⁵⁶¹ Amalānanda, 1247-1347 CE, author of a commentary on the *Bhāmātī*.

described as a non-brahman “with a cart, *sayugvan*”],⁵⁶² Vācakanvī⁵⁶³ [a woman, *BU* 3.6, 3.8], etc. If the *āśrama* duties alone were useful for knowledge, then these persons should not have had knowledge because they lacked the actions that produce (*sampādaka*) knowledge. Therefore, it is the view of the Kalpataru author that all good actions, such as bathing in the Ganga, *japa*, meditations on gods (*devatā-dhyāna*), etc., are useful for knowledge. But only obligatory actions (*nitya-karma*) can be useful for knowledge because actions are not useful for knowledge in any way other than the removal of the *pāpas*⁵⁶⁴ that are obstacles to knowledge. The fruits of the optional actions [performed for attaining specific desires] (*kāmya-karma*) are only in the form of the attainment of heaven, sons, etc.; they do not have the capacity to remove *pāpas*. Since only obligatory actions remove *pāpas*, all obligatory actions are useful in knowledge (*VP* 8.97, 406).

Sarvajñātman, the author of the *Samkṣepa-śārīraka* has said that all good deeds, optional as well as obligatory, are useful for knowledge because the *kaivalya-śākhā*⁵⁶⁵ states, “*yajñena vividiṣanti*, they desire to know through *yajña*” (*BU* 4.4.22).⁵⁶⁶ Here, the word *yajña* is used for obligatory and optional ordinary actions. Also, by statements such as “*dharmeṇa pāpam apanudati*, by *dharma* he removes *pāpa*,”⁵⁶⁷ etc., the ability of all good actions to destroy *pāpas* is known. Therefore, even optional actions, just like obligatory actions, are useful in [attaining] knowledge by the removal of the *pāpas*, which are obstacles to knowledge (*VP* 8.98, 406-7). Thus, all good actions are to be performed until the strong desire for knowledge [arises].

8.5 Utility of Renunciation (*Sannyāsa*) in Effecting Knowledge (*Jñāna*)

Then, on the arising of the desire for knowledge, accompanied by strengthened dispassion (*vairāgya*), renunciation (*sannyāsa*), in the form of the giving up of actions along

⁵⁶² I read, following Olivelle, against Śaṅkara, *CU* 4.1.7 as “*yatrāre’brāhmaṇasyānveṣaṇā ...*” (1998, 216, 548), as the more likely reading, as this seems in keeping with Nīscaldās’s reading, but I stay with the traditional *ŚBh* interpretation of *sayugvan* as “*sah yugvanā gantryā varatata iti*, one who stays with a small cart” (Śaṅkara et al. 1979, 130), over Olivelle’s “gatherer” (215, 548).

⁵⁶³ Vācakanvī’s daughter, Gārgī, is called Vācakanvī.

⁵⁶⁴ *Pāpa* is usually translated as ‘sin’ but that conflates religious doctrines. A better translation is “negative potency of improper actions.”

⁵⁶⁵ It is not clear what Nīscaldās is referring to as “*kaivalya-śākhā*.” No such named Vedic *śākhā*, theological sub-school, is known of. Here he cites from the *BU*, which is part of the *Śukla YajV* and is associated with two *śākhās* (schools), the Madhyandina and Kāṇva. See also n. 554 and n. 585.

⁵⁶⁶ *BU* 4.4.22 (Kāṇva) actually reads: *tam etam ātmānam vedānuvacanena brāhmaṇā vividiṣanti yajñena dānena tapasā’nāsakena*, brahmans seek to know this Self by the study of the Vedas, by sacrifice, charity, penance, fasting.

⁵⁶⁷ *Mahānārāyaṇopaniṣad* 22.1 (Jacob 1888, 23)

with their means, is to be undertaken. Just as the cessation of *pāpas* occurs by means of good actions, the cessation of *pāpas* that are obstacles to knowledge is also brought about through renunciation. Obstacles to knowledge are multifarious; the cessation of some obstacles occurs through action, and some through renunciation. Therefore, action and renunciation are both causes of knowledge through [effecting] the cessation of the knowledge-obstructing *pāpas*, and they are to be undertaken in sequence. It is the opinion of some [unnamed] teacher that renunciation is not a means of knowledge merely through effecting the cessation of *pāpa*, but that, along with the unseen potency (*apūrva*) generated through renunciation, a person attains knowledge through listening (*śravaṇa*) [to scripture], etc.⁵⁶⁸ Therefore, since *śravaṇa* is a component of renunciation, even those totally free from *pāpa* have to undertake renunciation. It is the opinion of the author of the *Vivaraṇa*, however, that “without renunciation, projection (*vikṣepa*) [due to ignorance] does not cease, and therefore the visible result of renunciation is the cessation of the projection that is an obstacle to knowledge.” In contrast, to say that “the cessation of *pāpa* that is an obstacle to knowledge, or the creation of *punya* that is the cause of knowledge” alone is the invisible result of renunciation is improper. Where a visible result is not possible, there alone an invisible result is conceived of. But when this visible result of renunciation, “the cessation of projection,” is possible, it is improper to speak of any unseen result. If a superior person in some different [non-renunciatory] stage of life (*āśrama*), should experience a cessation of projection in the form of desire, anger, etc., and the contemplation of Vedānta should become possible even in the intervals between (lit. *chidra*, crack, gap, break) [performance of] action, then although renunciation in the stated manner becomes useless, nevertheless, by the words of Gauḍapāda (*gauḍapādīya vacana*) “*āsupter āmrteḥ kālaṃ nayed vedānta-cintayā*, one should spend the time until asleep, and until death, in the contemplation of Vedānta,”⁵⁶⁹ and by the divine words (*bhagavad-vacana*), “*taccintanaṃ tat kathanam anyonyaṃ tat prabodhanam*,

⁵⁶⁸ See the discussion on p. 60 to review what “listening (*śravaṇa*), etc.” refer to.

⁵⁶⁹ This verse does not occur in the *MāKā*. The full verse is cited as *smṛti* (without mention of the source) in the *SLS* (Dīkṣita, Tīrtha, and Śāstrī 1890, 92), and also by Muktidananda (2010, 74), again without mention of the source, as “*āsupter āmrteḥ kālaṃ nayed vedānta-cintayā; dadyān nāvasaraṃ kiñcit kāmādināṃ manāgapī*. One should spend time in contemplation of Vedānta until one falls asleep, until the time of one’s death; one should not even give any time to desires and the like, however small [they may be].” A variant of *pāda ab* also appears in *Śiva Purāṇa* 1.18.25 as “*āsupter āmrteḥ kālaṃ nayed vai śiva-cintayā*.”

contemplation of it, speaking of it, and instructing it to one another,”⁵⁷⁰ and by the *śruti*, “*brahmasaṁstho ’mṛtatvam eti*, one who is established in Brahman arrives at immortality (CU 2.23.1),” only by the constant (*nirantara*) *śravaṇa*, etc., of Brahman, is knowledge attained. Sometimes, knowledge does not occur by *śravaṇa*, etc., that is performed in the times of breaks (*chidra*) in action, but renunciation is the cause of the practice (*abhyāsa*) of continual *śravaṇa*, etc. Therefore, renunciation is the cause of a visible result, and is not futile (VP 8.99-101, 407-8).

8.5.1 Eligibility for Renunciation

Given the utility of renunciation in effecting knowledge, Nīscaldās next presents differing opinions as to whether or not kṣatriyas, vaiśyas and śūdras are eligible for renunciation, as well as for *śravaṇa* (VP 8.102-111, 408-12), and concludes that all humans are eligible for knowledge and devotion. Even the lowest caste humans are eligible for knowledge of the Brahman (lit. *tattva-jñāna*, realization of the essence, i.e., Brahman). Due to the impressions (*saṁskāra*) of prior births, even those of the lowest caste can develop a desire to know (*jijñāsā*), and then can get knowledge by human statements (*pauruṣeya vacana*) [as opposed to the divinely revealed Vedas, *śruti*], thereby becoming liberated by the cessation of ignorance and its effects. If somebody (lit. *śarīra*, body) were without *ātmā*, then that entity could be considered ineligible for knowledge. Therefore, only humans are capable of self-knowledge (*ātma-jñāna*) (VP 8.110, 412).⁵⁷¹ To effect self-realization, one requires the Divine Properties (*daivī-sampadā*).⁵⁷² According to Nīscaldās, all beings have compassion (*dayā*), but it is only possible for brahmins to have forbearance (*kṣamā*), truth (*satya*), honesty (*ārjava*), and contentment (*santoṣa*), etc. On account of kṣatriyas having the active duty (*pravṛtti-dharma*) for the sake of protecting their subjects (*prajā*), they have somewhat fewer Divine Properties than brahmins. However, even their violence towards wicked beings

⁵⁷⁰ *YogVā* 3.22.24: “*tac-cintanaṁ tat-kathanam anyonyaṁ tat-prabodhanam; etad eka-paratvaṁ ca brahmābhyāsaṁ vidur budhāḥ*. Know this as the study of Brahman: contemplation of it, speaking of it, instructing it to one another, and one-pointed meditation of it.” This verse also occurs in *PD* 7.106.

⁵⁷¹ This has already been explored in greater detail in Ch. 4, particularly 4.3-4.5.

⁵⁷² The Divine Properties are enumerated in *BhG* 16.1-3 as: 1) *abhayaṁ*, fearlessness; 2) *sattva-saṁsuddhiḥ*, purity of disposition; 3) *jñāna-yoga-vyavasthiti*, perseverance in the practice of knowledge; 4) *dāna*, charity; 5) *dama*, self-control; 6) *yajña*, [practice of] ritual; 7) *svādhyāya*, study of scriptures; 8) *tapas*, austerity; 9) *ārjava*, honesty; 10) *ahiṁsā*, non-violence; 11) *satya*, truthfulness; 12) *akrodha*, absence of anger; 13) *tyāga*, renunciation; 14) *śānti*, peace; 15) *apaiśuna*, absence of wickedness; 16) *bhūteṣu dayā*, compassion towards [all] beings; 17) *aloluptva*, absence of greed; 18) *mārdava*, gentleness; 19) *hrī*, modesty; 20) *acāpala*, steadiness; 21) *tejas*, vitality; 22) *kṣamā*, forbearance; 23) *dhṛti*, resolve; 24) *śauca*, purity; 25) *adroha*, freedom from treachery; 26) *nātimānītā*, humility.

for the protection of the subjects from a sense of duty is only non-violence, and therefore, it is not impossible for a kṣatriya to have the Divine Properties. Although a vaiśya has even more physical activity, such as agriculture and trade, making it impossible for a vaiśya to have occasion for contemplation of *ātmā*, nevertheless many fortunate vaiśyas manage (*nirvāha*) in all affairs (*vyavahāra*) without physical activity, and it is possible for them to gain the Divine Properties. In the view of those teachers for whom kṣatriyas and vaiśyas are eligible for renunciation, the Divine Properties are easily possible for vaiśyas too. Although it is hard for śūdras and the lowest caste (*antya-jāti*) to attain the Divine Properties, the result of action is of endless types. Therefore, if they too should acquire the Divine Properties due to actions of prior lives, then a śūdra, by listening to the *purāṇas* and such, and the lowest caste by listening to vernacular commentaries (*bhāṣā-prabandha*) and the like, can also, by means of devotion to God, attain liberation without obstruction and thus attain Brahman-realization. Hence, all humans are eligible for devotion to God and Brahman-realization – this is the *nirdhāra*, conclusion of all scripture (*śāstra*) (*VP* 8.111, 413).

8.6 Chapter Summary

A lot of ground was covered in this chapter. Niścaldās examined in considerable detail the nature of ignorance and the illusoriness of the world, and whether or not action and renunciation are of utility in gaining knowledge. In both the Theory of Appearance and the Theory of Reflection, ignorance is considered to be the transforming material cause of the *anirvacanīya* entities. The common cause of the world is primordial ignorance (*mūlājñāna*), the ignorance that conceals the nature of Brahman. Secondary ignorance (*tūlājñāna* or *avasthā-ajñāna*) is the ignorance that conceals consciousness delimited by an *upādhi*. Are perceived entities such as a reflection in the mirror empirically real, or are they illusory? The persistence of such reflections even past the cognition of the mirror and the source of the reflection is initially explained by considering whether they result from either primordial or secondary ignorance, and Niścaldās returns to this when considering the nature of the cessation of empirical superimpositions. He concludes that such entities are known to be false (*mithyā*) even without the knowledge of Brahman, so they ought to be considered illusory. But if primordial ignorance is considered their source, then it is not possible for them to be illusory because only the knowledge of Brahman removes the empirical effects of

primordial ignorance; instead, it is the effects of secondary ignorance that are illusory, as they can be removed without knowledge of Brahman. Therefore, Nīscaldās revises the distinction between the empirical and the illusory: “That which is not produced by defects other than ignorance, but is only produced by ignorance, is empirical; that which is also produced by defects other than ignorance, it is called illusory.” (However, at the conclusion of the discussions of the nature of ignorance in the empirical state, in *VP* 8.56, 383, section 8.1 on p. 277ff. in the present text, Nīscaldās does concede that reflection-superimposition can be considered illusory in that they can be negated by opposing cognitions). The reflection in the mirror is a transformation of primordial ignorance located in Brahman-consciousness, and the substratum remains Brahman-consciousness alone; the reflection-superimposition is not produced by any defects other than ignorance, and hence it can only be empirical. Nīscaldās suggests that primordial ignorance alone should be considered the material cause of such superimposition because then the substratum does not differ dependent on whether the Theory of Appearance or the Theory of Reflection is considered.

Then, how can cessation of the reflection-superimposition occur without the knowledge of Brahman? The total cessation of ignorance occurs only by the cognition of the substratum devoid of obstructions. But as long as the obstruction of *prārabdha karmas* remains, the cessation of the portion of ignorance that is the cause of projection does not occur, even with the cognition of the substratum as Brahman. Where the cognition pertaining to objects other than the *ātmā*, such as a pot, etc., occurs, the cessation of their ignorance does not occur as long as the manifestation of the pot, etc., persists; however, there is a reduction in the concealment caused by ignorance. The cessation of the reflection-superimpositions is also experientially known by the immediate cognition of the face, mirror, etc., in a time devoid of obstructions. Only a cognition having the same object opposes ignorance; a cognition with different objects does not. Therefore, the cognition of the face, mirror, etc., opposes only the secondary ignorance situated in the consciousness delimited by the face, mirror, etc., but does not oppose primordial ignorance that veils Brahman.

Where the cessation of valid cognition is brought about by an erroneous cognition, or the cessation of one erroneous cognition is brought about by another opposing erroneous cognition, the cessation of the prior cognitions is brought about simply by the existence of the ignorance that is the material cause of the erroneous cognition. But where the cessation of

erroneous cognition is brought about by a valid cognition, the true cognition of the substratum also brings about the cessation of ignorance. Thus, the cessation of reflection-superimposition is possible without the cognition of the substratum, and also without the cessation of primordial ignorance, but merely by the cognition of the face, mirror, etc. The cognition of the substratum is a dispensable antecedent and is not a required cause in the cessation of superimposition. In a case where the cessation of superimposition occurs by means of the cognition of the substratum, only the cessation of ignorance is brought about by the substratum-cognition, and then, by the destruction of ignorance as the material cause, the superimposition ceases. Reflection-superimposition, similar to space and the rest of creation (*prapañca*), is caused by primordial ignorance. But the reflection-superimposition can be negated by an opposing cognition, even without cognition of the substratum. Nīscaldās also refutes at length the view that the *Pañcapādikā* holds that secondary ignorance is the cause for reference-superimpositions.

In the case of dreams, their material cause is considered to be secondary ignorance, but, because secondary ignorance is a particular form of primordial ignorance, primordial ignorance is the material cause of secondary ignorance. The substratum of the illusory dream seer is the empirical seer, and the substratum of the illusory vision is the empirical vision. Upon waking, the cognition of the empirical seer-seen itself is the cognition of the substratum of the dream, which brings about the cessation of the material cause in the form of secondary ignorance from which the cessation of the illusory seer-seen takes place. But since the empirical seer is also inert (*jaḍa*) and non-*ātmā* like the seen, it is not the substratum that imparts reality (*sattā*) and manifestation (*sphūrṭi*) to the dream. Instead, consciousness alone, non-delimited by ego and located inside the body, is the substratum of the dream state, i.e., *jīva*-consciousness in the form of a reflection in ignorance. Since consciousness is related to the cognizer, the dream-superimposition is immediately cognized without the functioning of the senses; the dream is illumined by the self-illumined *ātmā* without the functioning of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* and the senses. Nīscaldās also provides scriptural confirmation (*BU* 4.3.9) for the self-immediacy of dreams.

In the course of defending the immediacy of dream-cognitions, Nīscaldās shows that no *vyrtti* is required for their cognition as their substratum is *jīva*-consciousness, unlike the perception of external objects, whose substratum is Brahman-consciousness. Nīscaldās then

undertakes a brief digression, unrelated to the cognition of dreams, to discuss a difference of opinion between the *Samkṣepa-śārīraka* and Nṛsiṃhāśrama's *Advaita-dīpikā* regarding the use of *vṛtti* and the mind for the perception of space. Nīścaldās explains that both positions have defects, and that the defects can be overcome in each case “on the strength of the result (*phala-bala-taiṃ*),” but he concludes that the *Advaita-dīpikā* view is to be preferred as it does not require the improper acceptance of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* as an instrument for the immediate cognition of external objects, and therefore has economy (*lāghava*) over the *Samkṣepa-śārīraka* position. The saving grace for the *Samkṣepa-śārīraka*, according to Nīścaldās, is that it is engaging in *prauḍhi-vāda*, an extravagant assertion.

Self-effulgence need not be restricted to the dream state alone, and some Advaita thinkers extend this to all objects perceived in the empirical state. Nīścaldās presents the theory that perception is creation (*dr̥ṣṭi-sṛṣṭi-vāda*), wherein non-*ātmā* objects have no reality when uncognized (*ajñāta-sattā*), but only have reality when cognized (*jñāta-sattā*). As long as non-*ātmā* objects are revealed by the witness consciousness (*sākṣī-bhāṣya*), their apprehension as objects of cognition produced by the senses is also superimposed. There are two types of *dr̥ṣṭi-sṛṣṭi-vāda*. 1) Perception (*dr̥ṣṭi*), i.e., cognition itself, is creation (*sṛṣṭi*), and there is no creation separate from cognition. 2) Creation of a non-*ātmā* object takes place at the time of cognition of perception; prior to cognition, there is no non-*ātmā* object; therefore, everything seen has reality only when cognized (*jñāta-sattā*) and not when uncognized. According to Nīścaldās, these two kinds of *dr̥ṣṭi-sṛṣṭi-vāda* are accepted (*abhimata*) by all Advaita *śāstras*. He is less understated in his *VS*, where he unequivocally states that *dr̥ṣṭi-sṛṣṭi-vāda* is the Vedānta *siddhānta*.

Accepting the fact that all non-*ātmā* objects are unreal, the question arises regarding the property of illusoriness (*mithyātva*) which is possessed by unreal objects: is that property real or unreal? It cannot be real because that would violate non-duality. If it is unreal, it will be unable to repudiate the reality of creation (*prapañca*), and once again the Advaita position would be harmed. In response, Nīścaldās provides the *Advaita-dīpikā* resolution that illusoriness possesses an *anirvacanīya* empirical reality that is capable of repudiating the empirical reality of the creation, the two being of the same level of reality. If it be objected that the repudiation of the ultimate reality of creation is not possible by the empirical illusoriness of creation, Nīścaldās responds that a property being ascertained by a means of

valid cognition itself is the cause for the repudiation of an opposing property. The illusoriness of creation is also ascertained by the means of valid cognition, such as *śruti*, etc., and it repudiates the reality of creation. However, if only one reality is accepted, in the manner of “only the reality as Brahman appears in the pot, etc., and there is the absence of any further empirical or illusory difference in reality in these objects,” then the *Advaita-dīpikā* resolution is not possible. As a result, Nīscaldās presents his own solution: a property ascertained by a valid means of cognition can repudiate an opposing property, but, where the other property is also ascertained by a valid means of cognition, there is no repudiation. But, although reality is apprehended in creation by the perceptual means of cognition, human perception is weaker than *śruti* statements, which state that the creation is unreal and do not originate with humans (*apauruṣeya*). Brahman’s being with manifestation and being without manifestation (*saprapaṇcatva* and *niṣprapaṇcatva*) are both established by means of cognition. But the highest human goal, i.e., liberation, is attained only by the cognition of being without manifestation; hence, the purpose of *śruti* is to set forth the state of being without manifestation. The description of Brahman’s being with manifestation is useful in the understanding of non-dual Brahman without manifestation. However, since it is not the purpose of *śruti* to describe being with manifestation, the being with manifestation is not ultimate but is only conceived, and, having been produced by ignorance free from adventitious defects, it is empirical, and it is non-eternal since its producing cause, ignorance, can be ended knowledge (*vidyā*). Thus, being without manifestation negates being with manifestation, and the converse is not possible. Nīscaldās proceeds to provide five different ways in which the reality of the visible world is negated by its illusoriness (*mithyātva*), as put forth in Vedānta texts such as the *Tattva-śuddhi*, the *Nyāya-sudhā*, the *Samkṣepa-śārīraka*, and two other unnamed authors.

Having thus established the illusoriness of creation, Nīscaldās next takes up the means to dispel illusoriness. He starts off by bluntly stating that there is no use for action in bringing about the cessation of an illusory entity, and consequently it is futile to attempt to effect the cessation of *saṃsāra* by means of either action or by action combined with knowledge. Such cessation can only be brought about by knowledge. Wherever the combination of knowledge and action is described in *śruti* and *smṛti* texts, the purport is specifically the sequential combination (*krama-samuccaya*), where a practitioner first performs action only, and then

later, having renounced all action, engages in listening to scripture (*śravaṇa*), etc., for the sake of knowledge. According to Vācaspati, in the *Bhāmatī*, action is not an immediate means of knowledge but a means for the desire to know (*jijñāsā*). Vācaspati raised the defect that, “if actions are considered the means of knowledge, due to the fault arising of the performance of action [being required] till the dawn of knowledge, there will be the loss of *sannyāsa*, renunciation.” The *Vivaraṇa* resolution to this is that knowledge is established by action and *sannyāsa*. An action is to be done only as long as the detachment (*vairāgya*) and strong desire to know the inner essence (*pratyak tattva*) have not arisen through the purification of the *antaḥ-karaṇa*. But once the detachment and strong desire to know have arisen, only renunciation is to be performed in the form of the giving up of action along with the means. Thus, although actions alone are the means of knowledge, in the time subsequent to the strong desire to know, only the sections (*aṅga*) of renunciation (*sannyāsa*), the control of the inner and outer senses (*śama* and *dama*), etc., are to be performed. All good deeds, optional (*kāmya-karma*) as well as obligatory (*nitya-karma*), are useful in attaining knowledge, by causing the removal of the *pāpas* that are obstacles to knowledge.

Once the desire for knowledge, accompanied by strengthened dispassion (*vairāgya*), has arisen, renunciation, in the form of the giving up of actions along with the means, is to be undertaken. The cessation of *pāpas* that are obstacles to knowledge is brought about even through renunciation. Obstacles to knowledge are multifarious; the cessation of some obstacles occurs through action, and some through renunciation alone. Therefore, action and renunciation are both causes of knowledge, through effecting the cessation of the knowledge-obstructing *pāpas*, and are to be undertaken in sequence. Sometimes knowledge does not occur by *śravaṇa*, etc., performed in the times of breaks in action, but this will eventually lead to renunciation, the cause of the practice of continual *śravaṇa*, etc.

Nīścaldās next considers differing opinions as to whether or not kṣatriyas, vaiśyas and śūdras are eligible for renunciation as well as *śravaṇa*, and concludes that all humans are eligible for knowledge and devotion. Due to the impressions (*saṃskāra*) of prior births, even those of the lowest caste can develop a desire to know, and then through human statements (*pauruṣeya vacana*) [as opposed to the divinely revealed Vedas, *śruti*], they can gain knowledge of Brahman and become liberated by the cessation of ignorance and its effects. Only humans are capable of self-knowledge (*ātma-jñāna*). To effect self-realization, one

requires the Divine Properties (*daivī-sampadā*). Nīscaldās states that the conclusion (*nirdhāra*) of all *śāstras* is that all humans are eligible for devotion to God and Brahman-realization.

Having laid the groundwork regarding the nature of ignorance, illusoriness and reality, now Nīscaldās can examine the removal of ignorance by Brahman-realization and, at long last, the purpose of *vyttis*. We will look at this in the next chapter.

9 Brahman-realization Through *Vṛtti*

Having laid the groundwork regarding the nature of ignorance, illusoriness and reality, Niścaldās is now ready to bring the *VP* to a finish, by examining the removal of ignorance through Brahman-realization and, at long last, the purpose of *vṛttis*. In essence, Brahman-realization is the *vṛtti* of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* in regard to the identity of *jīva* and Brahman. In connection with Brahman-realization, Niścaldās has to resolve the doubt that, since the *antaḥ-karaṇa* is an effect of ignorance, the Brahman-realization in the form of the *antaḥ-karaṇa*'s *vṛtti* is also an effect of ignorance and cannot possibly oppose ignorance. Another possible doubt is whether, once ignorance is completely destroyed by Brahman-realization, the body of the wise person who becomes liberated while living (*jīvan-mukta*) through Brahman-realization ceases to exist. Niścaldās explains that the persistence of the enlightened person's body is due to the traces of ignorance (*avidyā-leśa*) that remain. Next, Niścaldās presents differing opinions concerning this trace ignorance. The only means (*karaṇa*) for Brahman-realization, according to Niścaldās, is continued meditation (*prasaṅkhyāna*), i.e., a continuous stream of *vṛttis*. This is compared to the *Bhāmatī* view that the mind is the means for Brahman-realization whereas continued meditation assists the process. Niścaldās makes the case that only words (*śabda*), in the form of the Upaniṣads, can be the instrument of the knowledge of Brahman. This then leads to a discussion of the immediacy of the knowledge of Brahman and the immediacy of any cognition and its object. The difference between the knowledge of Brahman produced by subsidiary Upaniṣadic statements (*avāntara-vākyas*) and that produced by the principal statements (*mahā-vākyas*) is then considered. Niścaldās examines three views regarding the production of immediate cognition by *śabda*, and considers several definitions of immediacy before presenting his own definition and demonstrating its soundness.

Finally, Niścaldās answers the last of the three questions that are the focus of the *VP*, the question regarding the use and result of *vṛttis*. A *vṛtti* is the cause of the *jīva*'s experience of *saṃsāra* in relation to the three states (waking, dreaming, and deep sleep), and it is also the cause of the attainment of liberation. Niścaldās presents three views of the use of a *vṛtti* in the waking state, and their differing conceptions of the *jīva*'s *upādhi*. The role of a *vṛtti* in the dreaming and deep sleep states is also discussed. Niścaldās suggests that the conception of these three states via *vṛttis* itself constitutes bondage, because the three states make up one's

experience of *saṃsāra*. But when the identity of *jīva* and Brahman is established by means of the Upaniṣadic statement that gives rise to the *ṛtti*, “I am Brahman,” liberation occurs.

The last topic that Nīścaldās examines constitutes the nature of the cessation of what was conceived (*kalpita*), viz., *saṃsāra*. Nīścaldās first presents at length the view of Ānandabodha’s *Nyāya-makaranda* that the cessation of the conceived is different from the substratum and that it is neither 1) real (*sat*), nor 2) false (*asat*), nor 3) both real and false (*sad-asat*), nor 4) neither real nor false (*sad-asad-vilakṣaṇa*), but instead is of a fifth type. Nīścaldās refutes the *Nyāya-makaranda* position and establishes that the cessation of the conceived can only be in the form of Brahman. Nīścaldās also refutes Ānandabodha’s objections against this view. Nīścaldās explains cessation of the conceived as destruction in form of a momentary modification of being (*bhāva-vikāra*). It persists for only one instant after knowledge takes place, after which, the absolute absence of the cessation of the conceived occurs, in the form of Brahman. Nīścaldās concludes the *VP* with the assertion that ignorance, the visible creation in the form of existence and non-existence, and its cessation, all are *anirvacanīya*, logically undefined; the negation of these elements itself is liberation.

9.1 The Removal of Ignorance by Brahman-realization (*Tattva-jñāna*)

The conclusion (*siddhānta*) of Advaita texts is that the cessation of ignorance and its effects is brought about by Brahman-realization. A doubt is raised in this context: “The *ṛtti* of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* in regard to the identity of *jīva* and Brahman is called Brahman-realization. Since the *antaḥ-karaṇa* is an effect of ignorance, the Brahman-realization in the form of the *antaḥ-karaṇa*’s *ṛtti* is also an effect of ignorance. It is well known that the cause and effect do not mutually oppose one another; therefore, it is not possible to speak of the cessation of ignorance by means of Brahman-realization.” Nīścaldās provides the resolution as follows. The rule that the cause and effect do not mutually oppose one another is a universal (*sāmānya*) rule, and the rule that the cognition and ignorance that have the same object do mutually oppose each other is a particular (*viśeṣa*) rule; the universal rule is negated by the particular rule. For example, the cloth is destroyed by the contact of cloth and fire, i.e., where there is contact, there are two material causes of the contact, and the cloth is one of the material causes, but the contact of cloth and fire also is of the form of the destroyer-destroyed opposition, and so the rule that the cause and effect never oppose each

other is not possible. However, [it may be argued that] according to the Vaiśeṣika *śāstras*, the cloth is not destroyed by contact with fire, but instead, the following sequence takes place: 1) the cloth comes in contact with fire; 2) action occurs in the threads that initiate the cloth; 3) the separation of the threads takes place by means of this action; 4) the non-inherent cause (*asamavāyī kāraṇa*) of the cloth, i.e., the contact between threads gets destroyed by their separation; and 5) the cloth is destroyed due to the destruction of the contact between threads. Thus, in the Vaiśeṣika view, a substance (*dravya*) is destroyed only by the destruction of its non-inherent cause, and the cause of the destruction of cloth is the destruction of the contact between threads and not the contact between cloth and fire. Nevertheless, if the destruction of cloth occurs solely by the aforementioned sequence, then the destruction of the cloth should be possible only in the fifth instant after its contact with fire, but it is seen to occur in the immediate instant after contact with fire. Thus, the Vaiśeṣika view is incorrect. Moreover, the components of the cloth that are reduced to ashes appear as coalesced (*saṁśliṣṭa*), and, similarly, a pot destroyed by a hammer appears only in pulverized form, without the destruction of the contact between the separate halves of the pot. Therefore, the destruction of the contact between the components (*avayava*) cannot possibly be a cause of the destruction of the whole (*avayavin*), and it is improper to consider the destruction of the contact between the threads of the cloth as the cause of the destruction of the cloth. But the contact between the cloth and fire can be a cause of the destruction of the cloth, and the cloth and the fire are the material cause of the cloth-fire contact. Thus, since the opposition of the cause and effect are also well known as the destroyer-destroyed, the rule that they never mutually oppose each other is not possible. In the same manner, the destruction of ignorance along with its effects is brought about by the ignorance-caused *vyrtti*-cognition [which takes the form of Brahman-realization] (*VP* 8.112-3, 413-5).

9.1.1 Traces of Ignorance (*Avidyā-leśa*)

Now a further doubt is possible. “If ignorance is completely destroyed by Brahman-realization, then the body of the wise person who becomes liberated while living (*jīvan-mukta*) through Brahman-realization should cease to exist because the persistence of the body, the effect, is not possible on the destruction of ignorance, the material cause.” A certain (unnamed) teacher offers this resolution. Even when an archer’s bow gets destroyed,

the momentum of the released arrow persists. Similarly, even on the destruction of the cause, ignorance, the persistence of the wise person's body is possible [for as long as there remains the fruition (*bhoga*) of already commenced (*prārabdha*) karma].⁵⁷³ But according to Nīścaldās, this resolution is not possible because the effect persists when the efficient cause is destroyed. But the persistence of the effect is not possible upon the material cause being destroyed. Here, the material cause of the speed of the arrow is the arrow, and its efficient cause is the bow; therefore, it is possible for the speed of the arrow to persist even after the bow has been destroyed. But on the destruction of the material cause, ignorance, the persistence of the effect, which is the wise person's body, should be impossible. Therefore, some authors have written that even upon Brahman-realization, a trace (*leśa*) of ignorance remains (*VP* 8.114-6, 415).

Due to differences of opinion, the nature of trace ignorance is explained in three ways: 1) just as the scent of garlic remains in a cleaned vessel, similarly the impressions (*saṃskāra*) of ignorance persist, and this persistence is called trace ignorance; or, 2) like a wooden board burned by fire, the ignorance which is negated by knowledge, but is incapable of causing its effect, is called trace ignorance; or, 3) ignorance has two portions, the power to conceal, and the power to project; through Brahman-realization, the portion of ignorance which is qualified by the concealing power is destroyed, but due to the obstacle remaining in the form of past accumulated actions [and their results] (*prārabdha karma*), the portion of ignorance qualified by the projection power is not destroyed. Therefore, even in the instant after Brahman-realization, the material cause of projections such as the body, etc., namely, the portion of ignorance qualified by concealing power remains left over, but it does not conceal one's nature (*svarūpa*) (*VP* 8.117, 415-6).

Sarvajñātman presents the following view. "In the instant following Brahman-realization, the body, etc., do not appear (*pratibhāsa*) to the one who knows (*jñānī*). Also, the *śruti* statements propounding the attainment of liberation while living (*jīvan-mukti*) do not intend a literal meaning (*svārtha*). Rather, these statements are only praise for the *śravaṇa* method (*vidhi*): listening to [teachings about] *ātmā* (*ātmā-śravaṇa*) is so exalted that by the glory (*pratāpa*) of *śravaṇa*, a person gets liberated even while alive. In this manner, the statements

⁵⁷³ Parenthetical explanation by Ātmānand Muni (Nīścaldās 1957, 581).

propounding *jīvan-mukti* are certainly not intended to imply that the knower's body persists or that the body appears to the knower after knowledge. In the immediate instant after Brahman-realization, liberation from the body (*videha-mokṣa*) occurs." In Sarvajñātman's view, there is no trace ignorance post-knowledge.⁵⁷⁴ But this view contradicts the knower's experience.⁵⁷⁵ By means of Brahman-realization, the cessation of ignorance takes place, along with its effects. In the following instant, the Brahman-realization also ceases. But if Sarvajñātman's view that there is no trace ignorance left is accepted, then the cessation of Brahman-realization will not happen in this order, because, according to Sarvajñātman's view, as a result of Brahman-realization, no non-*ātmā* items remain. Then, since only non-attached (*asaṅga*) consciousness remains, its destruction is not possible. Brahman-realization destroying itself is also not possible, and thus the destruction of Brahman-realization will not occur. Therefore, the cessation of Brahman-realization takes place in the very instant of the cessation of ignorance in this manner. When the powder (*raja*) of the *kataka* nut⁵⁷⁶ is added (*prakṣepa*) to water, the dirt in the water precipitates, and the *kataka* powder also precipitates along with the dirt; there is no need for another means for the precipitation of the *kataka* powder. Similarly, when [burning] charcoal is added to a grass heap, the grass heap is reduced to ashes, and the charcoal is also reduced to ashes along with the grass. In the same manner, when the cessation of ignorance along with its effects takes place, [since there is no other object left suitable for cessation],⁵⁷⁷ the cessation of Brahman-realization also occurs. There is no other means required for the cessation of Brahman-realization (*VP* 8.118-20, 416-7).

According to Padmapāda, the author of the *Pañcapādikā*, knowledge opposes ignorance alone, and not the effects of ignorance. Therefore, only the cessation of ignorance occurs from Brahman-realization; and then, in the instant following the cessation of ignorance, due

⁵⁷⁴ *ŚŚ* 4.38: "*samyag-jñāna-vibhāvasuḥ sakalam evājñāna-tat sambhavaṃ, sadyo vastu-bala-pravartana-marud-vyāpāra-saṃdīpitah; nirlepena hi dandahīti na manāḥ apy asya rūpāntaraṃ, saṃsārasya śinaṣṭi tena viduṣaḥ sadyo vimuktir dhruvā*. The radiant fire of the true knowledge [of *ātmā*], fanned by the gusting wind that is the power of Brahman (*vastu*), immediately and completely destroys ignorance and its products. Not even a trace of empirical existence (*saṃsāra*) remains in any form. Therefore, it is certain that the liberation of one who knows [*ātmā*] (*vidus*) is immediate." See also the next two verses (*ŚŚ* 4.39-40), where Sarvajñātman suggests that *jīvan-mukti* and trace ignorance hold in the case of *aneka-jīva-vāda*, the view that there are multiple *jīvas*, but from the standpoint of *eka-jīva-vāda*, the doctrine that there is only one *jīva*, these do not apply.

⁵⁷⁵ *jñānī ke anubhava ke viruddha hai* (*VP* 8.119, 416). This implies that Nīścaldās himself is a *jñānī*, knower.

⁵⁷⁶ The clearing nut, *strychnos potatorum*, also known as *nirmali* (Oudhia 2004).

⁵⁷⁷ These words are not in the KS source, they are supplied by Ātmānand Muni: *nivṛtta karane yogya koṭi vastu śeṣa na rahne se* (Nīścaldās 1957, 583).

to the absence of the material cause, its effect ceases by itself. But *prārabdha karma* is the obstruction to the cessation of the effects such as the body, etc. Therefore, as long as trace ignorance remains, it is also possible for the one who is liberated while living (*jīvan-mukta*) to see the body, etc. But when the *prārabdha karma* obstruction becomes absent, the body etc., and the Brahman-realization both cease. According to this view, the cessation of ignorance, along with the absence of *prārabdha karma*, is the cause of the cessation of Brahman-realization (*VP* 8.121, 417).

9.1.2 Means (*Karaṇa*) and Accessories (*Sahakārī sādhana*) for Brahman-realization

There are two means for Brahman-realization by which the cessation of ignorance takes place. According to all Advaita texts, 1) for the best aspirant (*uttama adhikārī*), *śravaṇa* (listening to scriptures), etc.,⁵⁷⁸ alone are the means (*sādhana*); and 2) for the middling aspirant (*madhyama adhikārī*), the contemplation of the self as attribute-less (*nirguṇa*) Brahman (*aham-graha upāsanā*)⁵⁷⁹ is a means of Brahman-realization.⁵⁸⁰ But, according to several authors, in both alternatives, continued meditation (*prasaṅkhyāna*) is the means (*pramāṇa*) as an instrument (*karaṇa*) for Brahman-realization. A continuous, ceaseless (*nirantara*) stream of *vṛttis* is called *prasaṅkhyāna*.⁵⁸¹ Just as the middling aspirant is required to perform contemplation (*upāsanā*) as ceaseless *vṛttis* in the form of attribute-less Brahman, and that alone is considered *prasaṅkhyāna* for that aspirant, similarly, for the best aspirant too, after contemplation (*manana*), *prasaṅkhyāna* in the form of *nididhyāsana*, “profound and continuous meditation on *śruti*,”⁵⁸² is the means for immediate cognition of

⁵⁷⁸ For a refresher on “*śravaṇa*, etc.,” see the discussion on p. 62.

⁵⁷⁹ *aham-graha upāsanā* is described in *BS* 3.3, and also in *CU* 3.14.1-4 (Śāṇḍilya Vidyā), *BU* 3.7.2-23 (Antaryāmī Vidyā, the dialog between Yājñavalkya and Uddālaka Āruṇi).

⁵⁸⁰ Nīścaldās describes the means for the best and middling aspirants at great length in *VS* 4.63-120 and *VS* 5.121-183 respectively. There, he also describes the means for *kaniṣṭha adhikārī*, the lowest aspirant “who has many doubts, even though his intellect is sharp, *jākūṃ śaṅkā bahut upajai tākī yadyapi buddhi tīvra hovai hai*” (*VS* 6.304, 184). Rather pointedly, the names of these three aspirants, from highest to lowest, are *Tattvadrṣṭi*, “seer of truth,” *Adṛṣṭi* “non-seer,” *Tarkadrṣṭi* “seer of doubts.”

⁵⁸¹ Henceforth, the term *prasaṅkhyāna* will be left untranslated to enable us to distinguish it from *nididhyāsana*. See n. 582 and also Raja (1990) and Sundaresan (1998) for the historical context for the interpretation of *prasaṅkhyāna* as contrasted to *parisaṅkhyāna*. In the *VP*, Nīścaldās appears to be using *prasaṅkhyāna* to mean *parisaṅkhyāna*, the form of meditation taught by Śaṅkara in his *Upadeśa-sāhasrī*, for seekers intent on destroying accumulated merit and demerits and preventing any further accumulation, *mumukṣūnām upātta-puṇyāpuṇya-kṣapaṇa-parāṇām apūrvānupacayārthinām parisaṅkhyānam idam ucyate* (Śaṅkarācārya 2006, 1:216).

⁵⁸² *nididhyāsana* is also often translated as “continuous meditation.” To distinguish it from *prasaṅkhyāna*, it can be considered as “profound and continuous meditation on the content of canonical Vedānta texts, which one has listened to (*śravaṇa*) and reflected on (*manana*), culminating in the knowledge of Brahman.” In his *VS*, Nīścaldās does not mention *prasaṅkhyāna* at all, and defines *nididhyāsana* as “the continued state of the *vṛtti* in the form of Brahman, without any

Brahman. Although *prasaṅkhyāna* is not present in the six-fold means of cognition (*pramāṇa*), and so it cannot possibly be considered as a means [of cognition], nevertheless, is well known in all *śruti* and *smṛti* texts that contemplation (*upāsanā*) of Brahman with attributes (*saguṇa* Brahman) is the means for immediate cognition of *saguṇa* Brahman, and contemplation of Brahman without attributes (*nirguṇa* Brahman), the means for the immediate cognition of *nirguṇa* Brahman. Similarly, the *prasaṅkhyāna* of a distant lover is well known in worldly life⁵⁸³ as the cause for the immediate perception of the lover; hence, *prasaṅkhyāna* in the form of *nididhyāsana* is also possible as a means of immediate cognition of Brahman. As stated above, *prasaṅkhyāna* is not a means of cognition; therefore, knowledge of Brahman caused by *prasaṅkhyāna* cannot be said to be caused by a means of cognition, and thus, the [*prasaṅkhyāna*-caused] knowledge of Brahman cannot possibly be a valid cognition (*pramā*). Nevertheless, just as an erroneous cognition leads to the correct result (*saṃvādī bhrama*),⁵⁸⁴ on account of the negation of objects not taking place without knowledge of Brahman, it is possible for the [*prasaṅkhyāna*-caused] knowledge of Brahman to be a valid cognition. Moreover, verbal testimony (*śabda-pramāṇa*) is the root cause of *prasaṅkhyāna* in the form of *nididhyāsana* [because *śravaṇa* and *manana* of *śruti* and *smṛti* is also implied by *nididhyāsana*], and because of this too it is possible for knowledge of Brahman to be a valid cognition (*VP* 8.122-3, 417-8).

It is the view of Vācaspati [Miśra], author of the *Bhāmatī*, that *prasaṅkhyāna* assists the mind, and the mind is a means of Brahman-realization, whereas *prasaṅkhyāna* being a means for Brahman-realization is not commonly known (*aprasiddha*). Meditation (*dhyāna*) on Brahman with and without attributes also assists the mind, but meditation is not the means of their immediate cognition; the mind alone is. Similarly [for Vācaspati], meditation on a distant lover is not the means of the immediate cognition of the lover, but, together with contemplation of the lover, the mind is the means of the immediate perception of the lover. In this manner, the mind alone is the instrument of knowledge of Brahman. However, the principal opinion of Advaita texts is that immediately after the knowledge caused by the

intervention from the *vṛttis* of non-*ātmā* forms, *anātmākāra-vṛtti kā vyavadhāna rahita brahmākāra-vṛtti kī sthiti*” (*VS* 1.18, 10-11). Also see the other definitions, n. 161, p. 65.

⁵⁸³ lit. *loka meṃ*.

⁵⁸⁴ For a discussion on, and examples of *saṃvādī bhrama*, an erroneous cognition leading to the correct result, see *PD* 9.1-13.

mahā-vākyas, there is no need for *prasaṅkhyāna*, but that the immediate perception of non-dual Brahman occurs via the *mahā-vākyas* themselves. The mind is an accessory in all cognitions; therefore, along with one-pointedness caused by *nididhyāsana*, the mind is also an accessory in the knowledge of Brahman. Nevertheless, the words in the form of the Vedānta statements alone are the means for the knowledge of Brahman, and not the mind. This is because the *antaḥ-karaṇa*, being the material cause of cognition in the form of a *vṛtti*, is the locus (*āśraya*) of this cognition, and therefore the mind can be the agent of cognition, but it cannot be a means. Even if somehow the mind as a means were accepted in a different cognition, even then it is absolutely contrary to consider the mind as a means for the knowledge of Brahman, because Brahman being the object of a mental cognition has been denied by *śruti* such as “*yan manasā na manute*, that which cannot be contemplated by the mind (*KeU* 1.6),” and instead, Brahman has been said to be taught by the Upaniṣads (*aupaniṣadatva*) alone. Therefore, verbal testimony (*śabda*) in the form of the Upaniṣads alone can be the instrument of the knowledge of Brahman. Although in the *kaivalya-śākhā*,⁵⁸⁵ where the mind has been denied as an instrument of the knowledge of Brahman, likewise, speech (*vāk*) has also been denied as the instrument. Therefore, [it would seem that] even *śabda* as the instrument for the knowledge of Brahman is opposed to *śruti*. Nevertheless, if the intent of *śruti* were that “*śabda* is not an instrument of knowledge of Brahman,” then to state [elsewhere]⁵⁸⁶ that Brahman to be taught by the Upaniṣads (*aupaniṣadatva*, *vedyatva*) would be improper. Therefore, the intent of *śruti* is that knowledge pertaining to Brahman takes place by the implied significatory relation (*lakṣaṇā-vṛtti*) of *śabda* alone, and not by the

⁵⁸⁵ Once again, I struggle to identify what Nīścaldās refers to as the *kaivalya-śākhā*. Earlier, in one instance it was not so obvious (n. 554), and in another, it was clearly a reference to the *BU* (n. 565), which falls in the *Śukla YajV* recension. Here, Nīścaldās seems to be referring to *TU* 2.4.1, 2.9.1, “*yato vāco nivartante aprāpya manasā saha; ānandaṃ brahmaṇo vidvān na bibhēti kadācana*. The one who knows the joy of Brahman, from which words, together with the mind, turn back without having attained it [the joy of Brahman], never fears [anything].” The *TU* is also part of the *YajV*, but from a different branch, the *Kṛṣṇa YajV*. There are traditionally said to be 101 *śākhās*, schools, of the *YajV*, but these were divided between the *Śukla* (15) and *Kṛṣṇa* (86) branches, and so even if the *kaivalya-śākhā* is from among these schools, it is unlikely that would include both the *BU* and *TU* from opposing branches (Gonda 1975, 324). The detailed enumeration of 109 schools (82 *Śukla* and 27 *Kṛṣṇa*) in the *Yajur-vṛkṣa* (Vira 1981) does not include the *kaivalya-śākhā*. [The numeric distribution of the *śākhās* between the *Kṛṣṇa* and *Śukla* branches in Vira is the opposite of Gonda who cites Vira and others, possibly incorrectly]. Incidentally, Śāṅkara is supposed to belong to the *taittirīya śākhā* of the *Kṛṣṇa YajV* (Pande 1994, 78), and Sureśvara to the *kāṇva śākhā* (Hino 1982, 4).

⁵⁸⁶ For example, *MuU*:1.1.4-5: *tasmai sa hovāca dve vidye veditavye iti ha sma yad brahmavido vadanti parā caivāparā ca. tatra ... parā yayā tad akṣaram adhigamyate*. [Āṅgiras] said to [Śaunaka], “There are indeed two types of knowledge that are to be learned, so say the knowers of Brahman. [These are] the higher and the lower. Of these, ... the higher knowledge is that by which the imperishable [Brahman] is attained.” *MuU* 2.2.3: *dhanur grhītvāupaniṣadaṃ mahāstraṃ ... lakṣyaṃ tad evākṣaram somya viddhi*. Grasping the weapon of the Upaniṣad as a bow, ... the target is the imperishable [Brahman] alone. Pierce it!

direct significatory relation (*śakti-vṛtti*).⁵⁸⁷ Thus, although the instrumentality of *śabda* for knowledge of Brahman is denied by the direct significatory relation, nevertheless, by the implied significatory relation, *śabda* is the instrument for knowledge of Brahman, and thus it is possible to say that Brahman is taught by the Upaniṣads (*aupaniṣadatva*). For those who consider the immediate perception of Brahman to be mental, even in their view the mediate (*parokṣa*) knowledge of Brahman is accepted [to occur] by means of *śabda* alone; therefore, since the instrumentality of *śabda* in attaining knowledge of Brahman is essential in both views, *śabda* alone should be considered the instrument of the direct perception of Brahman, and not the mind (*VP* 8.124-5, 418-9).⁵⁸⁸

9.1.3 The Immediacy (*Aparokṣatā*) of Knowledge and Its Object

Although *śabda* only has the capacity for producing mediate knowledge, and *śabda* cannot produce immediate knowledge, yet, after performing *śravaṇa* as described in the *śāstras*, immediate knowledge pertaining to Brahman can arise via *śabda*, qualified by the impressions (*saṃskāra*) of mediate knowledge and accompanied by one-pointed consciousness. For example, according to the theory of identity between the reflection and its source (*bimba-pratibimba-abheda-vāda*), the eyes have immediate perception of the sun, etc., when assisted by a vessel of water or a mirror, etc. In this case, the eyes by themselves do not have the capacity for the immediate perception of the sun, etc., and the eyes do not possess this capacity even with the proximity of a turbulent and dirty *upādhi*. The eyes only possess the capacity for the immediate perception of the sun, etc., when assisted by a steady and clear *upādhi*. Similarly, the immediate knowledge of Brahman is only possible through *śabda* when assisted by a mirror in the form of a pure, steady mind which is qualified by the impressions of the knowledge of Brahman. As another example, the cause of heaven is not produced by making an oblation (*homa*) to the gods by casting butter into a conventional (*laukika*) fire, but the production of unseen potency (*apūrva*) that yields heaven is certain when one makes such an oblation into a fire accompanied by Vedic purifying ceremonies (*saṃskāra*). Although *śruti* has described the oblation as a means for [attaining] heaven, an oblation that is destroyed in the following instant cannot possibly be a means for heaven

⁵⁸⁷ As discussed in *VP* 3.3, and in section 5.4.3, on p. 128.

⁵⁸⁸ Nīścaldās's arguments in this section parallel those of the *SLS*, chapter 3 (Dīkṣita, Tīrtha, and Śāstrī 1890, 96-7), but are not exactly the same.

[attained] at a different time; therefore, the [existence of] unseen potency is established by the postulation means of cognition (*arthāpatti pramāṇa*) in the form of the inapplicability of the oblation as a [direct] means for heaven. Similarly, *śruti* speaks of the cessation, through the knowledge of Brahman, of all suffering that is in the form of superimposition. The cessation of immediate superimpositions such as agency (*kartṛtva*), etc., cannot possibly occur through mediate knowledge of Brahman; it can only be brought about by immediate knowledge of Brahman. Therefore, due to the non-occurrence of the cessation of immediate superimposition, [and] the other means of cognition not pertaining to Brahman, the immediate knowledge of Brahman is proven [through postulation] to occur only through *śabda*. Just as the unseen potency generated by oblations is established through postulation on the basis of what is heard (*śrutārthāpatti*), the immediate knowledge of Brahman caused by *śabda* is also similarly established through *śrutārthāpatti*.⁵⁸⁹ In another text,⁵⁹⁰ *śabda* as the producer of immediate knowledge has been illustrated by an example: Although the mind alone is not capable of the immediate perception of external objects, the immediate perception of a deceased [lit. *naṣṭa*, destroyed] beloved (*vanitā*) certainly takes place through the mind accompanied by imagination (*bhāvanā*). Similarly, although *śabda* alone is not capable of effecting immediate knowledge, nevertheless, the immediate knowledge of Brahman takes place through *śabda* qualified by the impressions (*saṃskāra*) of mediate knowledge and accompanied by a mind conditioned as stated earlier [by *prasankhyāna*] (*VP* 8.126, 419-20).

Another author writes that the cognition and object both have immediacy, because, where the pot is cognized by the eyes, the immediate (*pratyakṣa*) cognition of the pot occurs, and the pot is also immediate; hence, both functions (*vyavahāra*) are known as such by experience. But in such a case, the immediacy of the cognition is not dependent upon the means of cognition, because, if cognition via the senses were immediate, and cognition via inference, etc., were mediate, then the immediacy or mediacy would be dependent upon the means of cognition. But authors have only refuted the immediacy of sense-produced cognitions. Therefore, cognition pertaining solely to immediate objects (*artha*) is called

⁵⁸⁹ Postulation on the basis of what is heard (*śrutārthāpatti*) as a means of cognition was explained in detail earlier, in *VP* 5 and in section 5.4.5, p. 133ff.

⁵⁹⁰ Nīścaldās does not mention which text this is, though a parallel is found in *SLS* 3 (Dīkṣita, Tīrtha, and Śāstrī 1890, 98).

immediate, and, the cognition of an immediate object is immediate itself; there is no insistence (*abhiniveśa*) on whether it occur via the senses or by other means of cognition. Thus, although the cognition of pleasure, etc., the cognition of Īśvara, and dream-cognitions are not sense-generated, they are still immediate. Therefore, the immediacy of cognition is not sense-generated, but rather the cognition pertaining to an immediate object (*aparokṣa-artha-gocara*) is called an immediate cognition (*VP* 8.127, 420).

A doubt may arise. Although the object of an immediate cognition is considered immediate, if cognition pertaining to an immediate object is also called immediate, the fallacy of reciprocal dependence arises because in the description of the immediacy of the cognition, the cognition of the immediacy of the object is a cause, and, in the description of the immediacy of the object, the cognition of the immediacy of the cognition is the cause. The reciprocal-dependence fallacy can certainly arise if the immediacy of the object is considered to be the state of being an object (*viśayatā*) of the immediate cognition, but, in actuality, the immediacy of the object is the [object's] identity with the cognizer-consciousness alone. Therefore, since the cognition of the immediacy of the cognition is not used in the description of the immediacy of the object, in spite of the requirement of the cognition of the object's immediacy in the description of the immediacy of the cognition, the mutual-dependence fallacy is not incurred (*VP* 8.128-9, 420-1). [Nīścaldās attributes this view to Advaita-vidyācārya at *VP* 8.139, 427; p. 327].

The pleasure, etc., properties (*dharma*) of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* are superimposed on the witness-consciousness. That which is superimposed does not have its own reality (*sattā*) apart from the reality of the substratum. Therefore, pleasure, etc., have immediacy, due to this [pleasure, etc.,] always being identical to the cognizer-consciousness (*pramāṭṛ-cetana*); then, the cognition pertaining to pleasure, etc., is also immediate. But since the external pot, etc., are superimposed on external consciousness, the cognizer-consciousness is not always identical with these objects. When the identity of the cognizer-consciousness with the external consciousness occurs by means of a *vṛtti*, then the cognizer-consciousness alone is the substratum of the pot, etc. Therefore, only when there is a sense-generated *vṛtti* pertaining to the pot, etc., the property of immediacy arises in the pot, etc.; thus, the cognition of the pot, etc., qualified by immediacy, is also considered to be immediate. When there is a *vṛtti* of inference, etc., pertaining to the pot, etc., at that time, as the cognizer-consciousness is not

identical to the pot, etc., the immediacy property is not present in these objects; thus, an inferential or other cognition of them is not considered to be immediate. However, Brahman-consciousness (*brahma-cetana*) is always immediate, because the cognizer-consciousness is always identical to Brahman-consciousness. Therefore, the knowledge of Brahman produced by verbal testimony (*śabda pramāṇa*) in the form of the *mahā-vākyas* is considered to be immediate as well. Thus, the immediacy or mediacy of cognitions is not dependent on the means of cognition but solely on the immediacy or mediacy of the object. The identity or difference of the cognizer-consciousness with the object-consciousness is the producer of immediacy or mediacy in the object. Therefore, it is possible to state that the knowledge of Brahman generated by *śabda* is also immediate (*VP* 8.130, 422).

9.1.4 Understanding the Immediacy of the Knowledge of Brahman

Now a doubt may arise that the knowledge of Brahman generated by the subsidiary Upaniṣadic statements (*avāntara-vākyas*) should also be immediate, in accordance with the above-stated view. Brahman, being the nature of the cognizer-consciousness in the above manner, has been considered to be ever-immediate, and the cognition pertaining to an immediate item is considered to be immediate. Thus, the mediate knowledge of the ever-immediate Brahman is not possible. But all authors have accepted only the mediate knowledge of Brahman through the subsidiary Upaniṣadic statements, similar to the mediate cognition of the tenth person that occurs by the statement, “the tenth person exists.” Even in the *Pañcadaśī*⁵⁹¹ and other texts, only the mediate cognition of the tenth person is spoken of, although the tenth person is identical to the cognizer-consciousness. Therefore, due to immediacy being natural to entities such as Brahman and the tenth person, all their cognitions should always be immediate only. To avoid this defect, it should be considered that *dharma* and *adharma*⁵⁹² are superimposed on the cognizer-consciousness in the same manner as pleasure, etc., and therefore, like pleasure, etc., *dharma* and *adharma* also should be immediate due to their being identical to cognizer-consciousness. Nevertheless, only an object suitable for immediate perception (*pratyakṣa*) is the producer of the immediacy in the object which is identical to the cognizer-consciousness. *Dharma* and *adharma* are not

⁵⁹¹ For the tenth person story, see n. 387, p.140.

⁵⁹² *dharma* here has a different sense than the earlier “property;” it indicates religious merit, and *adharma*, the converse, religious demerit.

suitable for immediate perception; therefore, despite their being identical to the cognizer-consciousness, they lack immediacy. For an object to have immediacy, along with the requirement that the object be suitable for immediate perception, there is also the requirement that the means of cognition be suitable. The Upaniṣadic subsidiary statements and the statement, “the tenth person exists,” do not have the capability of producing immediate cognition, but the *mahā-vākyas* and the statement, “you are the tenth person” do have the capability of producing immediate cognition.⁵⁹³ The capability of an object is known through the activity (*vyavahāra*) of perception, etc.; that is to say, the object in which the activity of perception takes place, while being identical with the cognizer, is a suitable object, and the object in which, despite being identical with the cognizer, the activity of perception does not take place, is considered an unsuitable object. Thus, just as pleasure, pain, etc., are suitable objects, and the impressions (*saṃskāra*) such as *dharma* and *adharma* are unsuitable objects, which are known by experience, similarly, like the object, the suitability of the means of cognition should also be known according to experience, that is to say, the external senses have the capability of generating immediate perception, inference has the capability of generating mediate cognition, and non-cognition (*anupalabdhi*) and verbal testimony (*śabda*) have the capability of generating both immediate and mediate cognition (*VP* 8.131-2, 422-3).

But there is the distinction that, for an object which is not in relation (*asambandhī*) to the cognizer, only mediate cognition can take place through *śabda*. For an object that has an identity relation with the cognizer, even if it also possesses suitability, only the mediate cognition of that object occurs via *śabda* if there are no words revealing the identity with the cognizer. A listener gets only the mediate cognition of the tenth person, or of Brahman, who is not different from the hearer, in the sentences, “the tenth person is/exists,” “Brahman is,” since there are no words revealing the identity with the cognizer. But in Sarvajñātman’s view, for an object that is suitable and identical to the cognizer, its immediate cognition alone occurs through the statement that also has the words revealing the identity with the cognizer. In this view, only *śabda* is the cause for the immediate knowledge of Brahman. This immediate knowledge of Brahman occurs solely by means of *śabda* that is qualified by the

⁵⁹³ Ātmānand Muni adds here, “Therefore, according to capability, the mediate knowledge of Brahman takes place by subsidiary statements, and immediate knowledge of Brahman occurs via the *mahā-vākyas*. *isliye yogyatānusār avāntara-vākyua se to brahma kā parokṣa-jñāna aur mahā-vākyas se aparokṣa-jñāna hotā hai*” (Nīścaldās 1957, 592).

impressions (*saṃskāra*) of the mediate knowledge of Brahman and is accompanied by a one-pointed consciousness, as has already been stated earlier⁵⁹⁴ (*VP* 8.133, 424).

Thus, immediacy is possible for knowledge of Brahman by accepting immediacy in cognition pertaining to an immediate object (*artha*) – this third view in between was stated. [The first view is that “the immediate knowledge of Brahman is possible only through *śabda* via postulation” (*VP* 8.126, 419-20; section 9.1.3, p. 320). The second view adds the qualification “when accompanied by the *saṃskāras* of the knowledge of Brahman” (*VP* 8.127, 420; section 9.1.3, p. 321). The third view, presently under discussion, is “the cognition pertaining to an immediate object (*aparokṣa-artha-gocara*) is called an immediate cognition” (*VP* 8.128-9, section 9.1.3, p. 322)]. This [third] view results in the defective argument (*dūṣaṇa*), “since the subsidiary Upaniṣadic statements pertain to the ever-immediate Brahman, the knowledge of Brahman produced by these statements should also be immediate.” Advaita-vidyācārya⁵⁹⁵ explained the immediacy connected with the object and cognition in a different manner, and, in this stated defective view, he has raised yet another defect, as follows. “If, considering an object (*artha*) identical to the cognizer as immediate (*aparokṣa-svarūpa*), the cognition pertaining to the immediate object is said to possess immediacy, then there will be non-pervasion (*avyāpti*) of the definition of this immediate cognition in the cognition as the self-revealing inherent pleasure (*svaprakāśa ātmasukha*). If the cognition whose object (*viśaya*) is the immediate object (*artha*) should be called immediate, then there is a mutual difference-dependent (*bheda-sāpekṣa*) subject-object relation between the object and the cognition, and in that place alone will the attribute of immediacy apply to the cognition. But, since the self-revealing pleasure is identical to the cognition, and the subject-object relation is not possible in this case, the stated definition is not possible. In the Prābhākara [Mīmāṃsā] view, cognition is said to be self-revealing, and cognition is considered to take the cognizer, its object, and its own nature as its objects, and so all cognitions are considered to pertain to the triad (*tripuṭī*) [of cognition, cognizer, cognized]. Despite there being identity between the subject and object, the subject-object nature has been accepted in this view. Consequently, for the Prābhākaras, the subject-object

⁵⁹⁴ In *VP* 8.126-7, 419-20, and at the beginning of section 9.1.3 on p. 360 above.

⁵⁹⁵ Advaita-vidyācārya is someone whose views are known only through references in Appayya Dīkṣita's *SLS*. The only academic study of his views is by Revathi (1990, 5-7, 159-237).

nature is not improper in pleasure, which is a self-revealing cognition wherein the meaning of self-revealing (*sva-prakāśa*) is one's own nature (*sva-*), and that of which [there is] the subject (*prakāśa*, as *viṣayin*). Thus, by this meaning, even in identity, the subject-object nature is possible. However, the difference between the revealing and the revealed is known by experience, and thus Prabhākara's subject-object nature in the absence of difference is improper. Also, the meaning of self-revealing (*svaprakāśa*) as stated above is not proper. Instead, according to Advaita texts, the meaning should be that by virtue of one's own reality (*sva-*), there is the absence of doubt, etc., (*prakāśa=samśayādi-rāhitya*), i.e., that which is free from doubt, etc., by virtue its own reality, is self-revealing (*svaprakāśa*). In this manner, since the subject-object nature is not possible in one's own pleasure (*svarūpa sukha*), which is identical to self-revealing cognition, the Prābhākara definition of immediacy is not possible" (*VP* 8.134-6, 424-5).

In response [to the further defects pointed out by Advaita-vidyācārya], Nīścaldās offers a definition for an immediate object that is free from the above defect. "The definition of an immediate object is the identity of the object with consciousness favorable (*anukūla*) to its (*sva-*) function (*vyavahāra*).” The *antaḥ-karaṇa* and its properties, pleasure, etc., are superimposed on consciousness, and therefore, there is identity of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* along with the properties such as pleasure, etc. Since these are revealed by the witness-consciousness, the witness-consciousness is favorable to their function. The identity of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* along with pleasure, etc., with the witness-consciousness (*sva-*), which is favorable to the function of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* along with pleasure, etc., is possible according to the definition. And merit (*dharma*) and demerit (*adharma*) also have an identity with the witness-consciousness, but due to the absence of their suitability, the witness-consciousness is not favorable to their function. And since there is no identity between the merit, etc., and the consciousness favorable to their function, they do not have immediacy. Similarly, at the time of the *vr̥tti* pertaining to a pot, etc.,⁵⁹⁶ the consciousness delimited by the *vr̥tti* is identical with the substratum-consciousness of the pot; therefore, at that time, the pot-consciousness is favorable to the function of the pot, and the pot, which is identical to the consciousness, is considered immediate. At the time when the *vr̥tti* pertaining to the pot is

⁵⁹⁶ In what follows, the “etc. (*ādi*)” is dropped to avoid awkward expressions; “pot” stands for any external object, “pot, etc.”

absent, the pot remains identical to its substratum-consciousness, but the substratum-consciousness is not favorable to its function because only on becoming identical with the *vr̥tti*-delimited consciousness does the pot's substratum-consciousness become favorable to its function. That is the reason why the pot is not immediate when the *vr̥tti* pertaining to the pot is absent. Similarly, only the witness-consciousness delimited by the *vr̥tti* pertaining to Brahman is favorable to the function of Brahman, and immediacy is possible for Brahman, which is identical to it [the witness-consciousness delimited Brahman-*vr̥tti*]. Just as the identity of the object with consciousness that is favorable to the function of the object facilitates the immediacy (*pratyakṣatva*) in the object, similarly the identity of consciousness that is favorable to the function as a pot (*ghaṭādika-vyavahātānukūla caitanya*) with the pot object facilitates the immediacy in the cognition (*VP* 8.137, 425-6).

However, this definition of immediacy is inapplicable (*avyāpti*) to immediate perceptual cognition in the form of a *vr̥tti*. Although the pot, etc., are superimposed on consciousness, and, at the time of the *vr̥tti* in the form of the pot, since there is a unity (*ekatā*) between the pot-consciousness and the *vr̥tti*-consciousness, the pot, which is identical to its substratum, the pot-consciousness, also has identity with the *vr̥tti*-consciousness. Nevertheless, even at that time, it is not possible for the *vr̥tti* to be identical to the pot. Just as the snake, stick and garland, which are imagined in the rope, even while being identical to the rope, do not have identity but still have mutual differences among themselves, similarly, even while all the dualities conceived of in Brahman are identical to Brahman, they are not mutually identical. Although it is possible for the *vr̥tti* and the pot to each have identity with the *vr̥tti*-consciousness, nevertheless the mutual identity of the *vr̥tti* and the pot object is not possible (*VP* 8.138, 426).

This shortcoming can be removed in the manner of Advaita-vidyācārya, according to whom, the property (*dharma*) of immediacy pertains to consciousness and not to the *vr̥tti*. The property of immediacy does not pertain to the *vr̥tti* in the same manner that the [properties of] being inferred, desired, etc. (*anumititva*, *icchātva*) are properties of the *antaḥ-karaṇa vr̥tti*. Instead, immediacy pertains only to the consciousness delimited by the *vr̥tti* in the form of the object; the *vr̥tti* is only the *upādhi* of the immediacy of consciousness. Therefore, by superimposing immediacy on the *vr̥tti*, it functions [lit. *vyavahāra karai hai*] as

“the *vr̥tti*-cognition is immediate.” If the property of immediacy were desired in *vr̥tti*-cognition, and the definition of immediacy did not cover [lit. *nahīm jāvai*] *vr̥tti*-cognition, then non-pervasion (*avyāpti*) would occur; but *vr̥tti*-cognition is not even the indirect meaning (*lakṣya*). Therefore, the non-pervasion is not an issue, and instead, the indirect meaning of immediacy is the consciousness delimited by the *vr̥tti*. In the cognition of pleasure, etc., immediacy is only possible if immediacy is accepted as the property of consciousness. If immediacy were to be considered a property of the *vr̥tti*, then the view wherein the *vr̥tti* pertaining to pleasure, etc., is not accepted, there, due to the absence of the *vr̥tti* in the cognition of pleasure, etc., in the form of the witness, the experience [lit: *vyavahāra*, function] of immediacy should not occur. Thus, immediacy is a property of consciousness, and not of the *vr̥tti* (*VP* 8.139, 427).

Regarding this view, a doubt may arise: If immediacy is the property of consciousness alone, then everyone should experience [lit: *vyavahāra*] that “Brahman is immediate” because the identity of *jīva* with Brahman is ever-present, even in the state of *saṃsāra*. The knowledge of Brahman caused by subsidiary Upaniṣadic statements should also be immediate, since the Brahman form of the witness-consciousness delimited by the *vr̥tti* produced by the subsidiary statements is always identical to the object. According to Nīścaldās, this doubt is not possible. The definition of an immediate object is the identity of the unconcealed object with the consciousness suitable to its function. The definition of immediate cognition is the identity of consciousness suitable to its function with the unconcealed object. Here, even with the concealed Brahman that has identity with consciousness suitable to its function in the state of *saṃsāra*, due to Brahman being concealed, there is no identity of the object as the unconcealed Brahman with consciousness suitable to its function, and so the immediacy of Brahman does not occur. Similarly, since the knowledge caused by the subsidiary Upaniṣadic statements is identical with the object in the form of concealed Brahman, immediacy does not apply to the knowledge (*VP* 8.140-1, 427-8).

Nīścaldās raises yet another doubt concerning the above position. If, as described above, immediacy is accepted as caused by the mutual identity between consciousness and the unconcealed object, then the fallacy of reciprocal dependence will arise. If only cognition that pertains to the same sphere (*samāna-gocara-jñāna-mātra*) is accepted as having the

ability to end concealment, then even mediate cognition should cause the cessation of ignorance. Vedānta (*siddhānta*) accepts mediate cognition as bringing about the disappearance (*tirodhāna*) or the destruction of the power of ignorance that causes non-existence (*asattvāpādaka*), but the destruction of the particular power of ignorance that causes the non-manifestation (*abhānāpādaka*) occurs only by means of immediate cognition. Thus, 1) the cessation of ignorance is dependent upon the proof of the immediacy of cognition; and, since the definition of the immediacy of cognition has been stated as “the identity of an unconcealed object with consciousness suitable to its function,” 2) the proof of the immediacy of cognition is said to be dependent upon the cessation of ignorance (*VP* 8.142, 428).

This doubt is resolved as follows. Although, as stated earlier, the cessation of ignorance is required for the immediacy of cognition, the immediacy of cognition is not required for the cessation of ignorance. In order to remove the defect, “if cognition alone is accepted to cause the cessation of ignorance, then the cessation of ignorance should also occur by mediate cognition [discussed in *VP* 8.131, at the beginning of this section, 9.1.4, on p. 323],” immediate cognition was said to bring about the cessation of ignorance, and there, too, the reciprocal-dependence fallacy was incurred. Therefore, the cessation of ignorance is said to occur neither through cognition, nor through immediate cognition alone. Rather, it is accepted that the cessation of ignorance occurs by the very cognition that establishes the identity-relation (*tādātmya sambandha*) between the cognition and the object, through the power (*mahimā*) of the means of cognition. Hence, through the power of the means of cognition, sometimes the cognition of the pot, etc., produced by external senses is one of identity-relation with the pot and such objects, and sometimes the knowledge of Brahman, which is produced by *śabda* in the form of the *mahā-vākyas*, is one of identity-relation with the object in the form of Brahman, and the cessation of ignorance is brought about by both these cognitions. Since Brahman is the material cause of all, all cognitions have an identity-relation with Brahman; therefore, the cessation of the ignorance of Brahman should also be brought about both by the inferential knowledge of Brahman and by the mediate knowledge of Brahman caused by the subsidiary Upaniṣadic statements. However, the identity-relation that such inferential and mediate cognitions have with their object [namely, Brahman] occurs through the power of the object and not through the power of the means of cognition. In the

case of the cognition that occurs through the *mahā-vākyas* pertaining to the identity (*abheda*) of the *jīva* and Brahman, that cognition's identity-relation with its object [namely, Brahman] occurs through the power of the means of cognition. Since Brahman is pervasive and is the material cause of all, the identity-relations that other cognitions have with Brahman occurs through the power of the object. In this manner, the statement, "the cessation of ignorance occurs through the cognition related to the object, produced by a distinctive (*vilakṣaṇa*) means of cognition," on the one hand, does not have the fault (*āpatti*) of the cessation of ignorance by mere cognition, and, on the other hand, due to the absence of the requirement of the immediacy of cognition, the reciprocal-dependence fault also does not arise. Thus, the definition of an immediate object is "the identity of the object with the unconcealed consciousness favorable to its function," and the definition of immediate cognition is "the identity of the unconcealed consciousness with the object." Therefore, immediacy is also possible in knowledge of Brahman produced by *śabda* (*VP* 8.141, 428-9).

Thus, three views⁵⁹⁷ have been stated regarding the production of immediate cognition by *śabda*, and, among these, only the first is proper: "The mediacy or immediacy of a cognition is dependent on the means of cognition, and *śabda* qualified by assisting means also possesses the capability of producing immediate cognition." The second view has the purport, "The properties of cognition, such as immediacy, etc., are dependent on the object, and not on the means of cognition," and the third view is that of Advaita-vidyācārya [p. 327]. If, according to both these [second and third] views, immediacy, etc., are considered to be dependent on only the object, then the immediate knowledge of Brahman should also occur through subsidiary statements. Therefore, the necessary dependency of the immediacy of cognition on the means of cognition needs to be stated, as per the first view [first stated in *VP* 8.126, 419-20; p. 320] (*VP* 8.144, 429).

9.2 The Purpose of a *Vṛtti*

Nīscaldās is now ready to address the final question concerning *vṛttis*. He reminds us that three questions were presented at the start of *VP*. 1) What is the nature of a *vṛtti*? 2) What (lit. who, *kaun*) is the cause of a *vṛtti*? 3) What is the use and result of a *vṛtti*? A *vṛtti* was generally defined as "the modification of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* and ignorance, in the form of

⁵⁹⁷ See p. 365 for a concise reiteration of the three views.

illumination,” and then its particular nature was described via its differences, based on truth (*yathārthatva*), falsity (*ayathārthatva*), etc. Through the description of the means of cognition, the nature of the cause of a *vr̥tti* was also stated. The succinct answer to the third question is as follows: the relation of the *jīva* with all three states, [waking, dreaming, and deep sleep], occurs by means of a *vr̥tti*, and the attainment of liberation [lit. *puruṣārtha*] is also by means of a *vr̥tti*. In other words, a *vr̥tti* is the cause of the attainment of *saṃsāra*, and also the cause of the attainment of liberation, since the *jīva* experiences *saṃsāra* in relation to the three states (*VP* 8.145-6, 429-30).

Of the three states, the waking state is provisionally defined as “a particular state of the cognition caused by the senses.” Here, the word “state (*avasthā*)” signifies time. Although the time of the cognition of pleasure, etc., and the time of indifference (*udāsīna-kāla*) are also called the waking state, the cognition of pleasure, etc., is not caused by the senses. Similarly, at the time of cognition of pleasure, etc., the cognition of other objects is also not sense-caused. Nonetheless, “the time that is the basis (*ādhāra*) for sense-caused cognition and for the impressions (*saṃskāra*) of sense-caused cognition, different from the dream and deep sleep states,” should be called the waking state. Although there is no sense-caused cognition at the time of the cognition of or the indifference to pleasure, etc., their impressions persist, and therefore the definition contains [the qualifier] “different from the dream and deep sleep states.” Thus, the waking-state function is dependent on sense-caused cognition, and that sense-caused cognition is in the form of a *vr̥tti* of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* (*VP* 8.147, 430).

Nīścaldās presents three views on the purpose of a *vr̥tti*:

- 1) An [unnamed] author writes that the use of a *vr̥tti* is to overcome concealment (*āvaraṇa-abhibhāva*). There are diverse opinions in connection with the overcoming of concealment. Among them, some say that, just as the light of a firefly destroys deep darkness in one place, similarly, the destruction of ignorance in one place is the meaning of the term “overcoming of concealment.” This is the traditional (*sāmpradāyika*) view. In the view of those who hold that “collective ignorance is the *upādhi* of *jīva*-consciousness,” consciousness is always in relation to objects such as a pot, etc.; therefore, the object’s relation with consciousness cannot possibly overcome concealment since the Brahman-consciousness assists concealment and does not prevent it. If Īśvara’s consciousness is said to overcome concealment, then the *jīva*’s function (*vyavahāra*) of

overcoming of concealment in the form, “this is understood (*avagatam*) by me,” should not occur, but instead it should be “[it] is understood by Īśvara.” There is an empirical difference between *jīva* and Īśvara; therefore, an item known by Īśvara is not known by the *jīva*. Thus, if the overcoming of concealment is said to occur by the relation of *jīva*-consciousness, then in this view, the *jīva*-consciousness is always in relation with the pot, etc. The *upādhi* of the *jīva*-consciousness is primordial ignorance (*mūlājñāna*), and the consciousness qualified by the reflection superimposed on it [primordial ignorance] is called the *jīva*. Primordial ignorance always has a relation with the pot, etc., and therefore, the *jīva*-consciousness also always has a relation with objects. Therefore, if the overcoming of concealment were to occur by means of the relation of consciousness, then the overcoming of concealment of the pot, etc., should always persist. Similarly, if the overcoming of concealment is said to occur by means of a *ṛtti*, then it should also occur by means of a mediate *ṛtti*. Hence, it should be accepted that either an immediate *ṛtti* or the consciousness qualified by an immediate *ṛtti* overcomes the concealment. Just as the great darkness is [briefly] destroyed in some place by the illumination of a firefly, and in the absence of the firefly, the great darkness spreads again, similarly, a portion of primordial ignorance is destroyed by either the relation of an immediate *ṛtti* or by consciousness qualified by an immediate *ṛtti*; but, in the absence of the *ṛtti*, ignorance spreads again. This is the view according to tradition. Here, the purpose (*prayojana*) of an immediate *ṛtti* is to destroy a portion of [primordial] ignorance, and that of a mediate *ṛtti* is to destroy the portion of ignorance that causes non-existence (*asattvāpādana*). In this manner, in this view (*pakṣa*), the purpose of a *ṛtti* is only to destroy concealment (VP 8.148-51,430-2).

- 2) According to another view, the purpose of a *ṛtti* is the relation of the individual consciousness with the object. In the view, “the *jīva* is the reflection of collective (*samaṣṭi*) ignorance [namely, primordial ignorance],” although the *jīva*-consciousness always has a relation (*sambandha*) with the pot, etc., the object is not illumined by the general relation of the *jīva*-consciousness, but rather, the cause of the illumination of the object is the dissimilar (*viśātīya*), i.e., particular relation of the *jīva*-consciousness. Thus, the illumination-causing relation is dependent upon a *ṛtti* and is of the form of manifesting, i.e., the “manifesting” (*abhivyañjaka*), and becoming manifest, i.e., the

“manifested” (*abhivyaṅgya*). The object has the property of manifesting (*abhivyañjakatā*), and the *jīva*-consciousness has the property of becoming manifest (*abhivyaṅgyatā*). That in which the reflection occurs is called the manifestor [that which manifests], and that which is reflected is called the manifested. For example, where the reflection of a face occurs in a mirror, the mirror is the manifestor and the face is the manifested. Similarly, where the reflection of consciousness occurs in the objects such as pot, etc., the pot is the manifestor and the consciousness is the manifested. Thus, the object, a pot, etc., has the property of manifesting (*vyañjakatā*) in the form of assuming (*grahāṇa*) the reflection, and the consciousness has the property of being manifested (*vyaṅgyatā*) in the form of presenting (*samarpaṇa*) the reflection. Objects such as a pot, etc., do not naturally have the capability of assuming the reflection. They become fit for assuming the reflection of consciousness by the relation of the *vr̥tti* in their form, just as the reflection of the sun on the wall does not occur without the relation of the mirror; therefore, the wall has the capability of assuming the reflection of the sun only due to the relation of the mirror. In this example, the general relation of the sunlight with the wall is always present; nevertheless, the manifestor-manifested relation is dependent upon the mirror. Similarly, although the relation of the *jīva*-consciousness with the object is always present, nevertheless the capability of the pot, etc., to assume the reflection of the *jīva*-consciousness only comes from the relation with a *vr̥tti*. Therefore, the manifestor-manifested relation of the *jīva*-consciousness with the pot, etc., is dependent upon a *vr̥tti*. Thus, the *vr̥tti* is the cause of the differing relation of the *jīva*-consciousness with the pot, etc.; it occurs for the sake of the relation with the object, so the object is illumined by that relation. In the view that “the *jīva*-consciousness is all-pervasive (*vibhu*),” the *vr̥tti* is the cause of the differing relation (*VP* 8.152, 432-3).

- 3) In the view, “the nature of the *jīva* is consciousness qualified by the *antaḥ-karāṇa*,” the *jīva* does not have any relation with the pot, etc., without the *vr̥tti*; but when, by the relation of the senses and the object, the *vr̥tti* of the *antaḥ-karāṇa* goes towards the object, then the relation of the *jīva*-consciousness occurs with the pot, etc. Without the external venturing forth of the *vr̥tti*, there is no relation of the inner *jīva* with the external pot, etc. Thus, in the view that “the *jīva* is consciousness delimited (*paricchinna*) and

distinguished (*avacchinna*) by the *antaḥ-karaṇa*,” the *ṛtti* is only for the sake of the relation with the object (*VP* 8.153, 433).

In the views where “the *jīva* is that which has ignorance as its *upādhi*” (1 & 2), the *jīva*-consciousness is always in relation with the object, but the manifest-manifested relation does not occur all the time, and the *ṛtti* functions to provide this relation. In the view that “consciousness delimited by the *antaḥ-karaṇa* is the *jīva*” (3), the *jīva* is not always in relation with the object, but the *ṛtti* occurs for providing this relation. However, to speak of the difference in the relation of the *ṛtti* on the basis of differing views is improper, because, where the *antaḥ-karaṇa* has been accepted as the *upādhi* of the *jīva* (3), even in that view it is certainly desired to have ignorance as the *upādhi* of *jīva*-ness (*jīva-bhāva*); otherwise the *jīva* as *prājñā* [the form of the *jīva* in deep sleep] does not occur. Consequently, in everybody’s view, the *upādhi* of *jīva-bhāva* is ignorance alone [as is held by (1)]. The erroneous conception (*abhimāna*) of doer-ship, etc., occurs in that which is qualified by the *antaḥ-karaṇa*, and therefore, consciousness delimited by the *antaḥ-karaṇa* alone has been called the *jīva* (3). In the case of the view where the *jīva* has been taken to be the reflection in ignorance (2), there too the cognizer has not been considered to be the consciousness qualified by ignorance, but instead, the cognizer has been considered to be the consciousness qualified by the *antaḥ-karaṇa* alone. In this view (2), although the relation of the *jīva* to the object is considered ever-present, the cognizer-consciousness does not always have such a relation with the object. Nevertheless, the illumination of the object is considered to occur only by its relation with the cognizer-consciousness alone, and the illumination of the object does not occur via the relation of the *jīva*-consciousness with the object. Just as Brahman-consciousness and Īśvara-consciousness are facilitators of ignorance, so also is the consciousness of the *jīva*, which has ignorance as its *upādhi*. Even with the relation of that *jīva*-consciousness, any function (*vyavahāra*) of being known (*jñātātā*), etc., does not occur in the object, and neither does the conception (*abhimāna*) of being known, etc., occur in the *jīva*-consciousness. Rather, the function of being known, etc., in the object, and also the cognizer’s conception of that function, occurs only by the relation of the cognizer to the object. Such a cognizer resides in a location different from the object, and therefore the cognizer does not always have a relation with the object, but instead the relation only occurs dependent upon the *ṛtti*. Thus, whether the *jīva*’s *upādhi* is considered to be pervasive or

delimited, in both views the relation of the cognizer with the object is the same and is dependent upon the *vr̥tti* alone. Nīscaldās suggests that the stating of the difference between the two is solely for the revealing of the cleverness of one's intellect (*buddhi-pravīṇatā-khyāpana*), but there is no relation between the cognizer and the object, and therefore, it only demonstrates the lack of cleverness of one's intellect! (*VP* 8.154-5, 433-4).

Since the cognizer is not always in relation with the object, four kinds of consciousness have been stated: 1) cognizer-consciousness (*pramāṭṛ-cetana*), consciousness qualified by the *antaḥ-karaṇa*; 2) means-of-cognition consciousness (*pramāṇa-cetana*), consciousness delimited by a *vr̥tti*; 3) object-consciousness (*viṣaya-cetana*), consciousness delimited by the pot, etc.; 4) result-consciousness (*phala-cetana*), the reflection of consciousness that occurs in the pot, etc., by the relation of the *vr̥tti*. If the cognizer were always in relation with the object then the partitioning of the cognizer- and object-consciousness (1 & 3) would be improper. Some say that, when just the pot-delimited consciousness is unknown, then it is the object-consciousness, and when it is known, then it is called both the result-consciousness and the consciousness of the cognized (*prameya-cetana*). But Vidyāraṇya and the author of the *Vārtika* [Sureśvara] have named result-consciousness as the manifestation (*ābhāsa*) of consciousness that occurs in the pot, etc., in the instant following the *vr̥tti* of the means of cognition. In this manner, the cognizer-consciousness is circumscribed (*paricchinna*), and only by its relation is the object illumined. Even if the *jīva*-consciousness is considered to be all-pervasive (*vibhu*), the relation of the cognizer with the object is caused by a *vr̥tti*. Therefore, in both views, there is no difference in the relation with the object (*VP* 8.156, 434-5).

The *vr̥tti* of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* caused by the senses, functioning as described above, occurs in the waking state. Contrary to this, the state of the immediate (*aparokṣa*) *vr̥tti* of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* pertaining to an object, which is not caused by the senses, is called the dream state. In the dream state, the cognition and the cognizer are the modifications of the *antaḥ-karaṇa*. The state of the *vr̥tti* pertaining to pleasure and ignorance (*avidyā*) in the form of the immediate (*sākṣāt*) modification of ignorance (*ajñāna*) is called the deep sleep state, because in deep sleep only the *vr̥ttis* pertaining to pleasure and ignorance occur. Although *vr̥ttis* pertaining to ignorance, such as “I do not know,” also occur in the waking state, the waking

state *vr̥tti* is of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* and not of ignorance, and so there is no over-application (*ativyāpti*) of the definition of deep sleep to the waking state. Similarly, in the waking state, the *vr̥tti* in the form of apparent silver is a modification of ignorance, but it does not pertain to ignorance. In the same manner, the *vr̥tti* in the waking state pertaining to pleasure is not a modification of ignorance. In deep sleep, the witness seated in the *vr̥tti* of ignorance illuminates ignorance and also the pleasure that is its nature (*svarūpa-sukha*⁵⁹⁸). The person's *antaḥ-karaṇa* becomes absorbed (*līna*) in the portion of ignorance that has been modified into pleasure in deep sleep, and resides there. Then, at the time of waking, that portion of ignorance gets modified into the *antaḥ-karaṇa*. Therefore, in the waking state, the pleasure experienced in deep sleep is recollected by means of a *vr̥tti* of ignorance. Because there is no difference between the material cause and the effect, there is also no case-relation (*vyadhikaraṇatā*) between the experience and the recollection (*VP* 8.157-9, 434-6).

In this manner, there are three states of the *jīva*. Some include dying and fainting (*mūrchā*) within deep sleep while others consider them to be separate [states]. The difference between the three mentioned states is dependent upon the *vr̥tti*. In the waking and dream states, the *vr̥tti* is of the *antaḥ-karaṇa*, and in deep sleep, the *vr̥tti* is of ignorance. In the waking state, the *vr̥tti* of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* is caused by the senses, but, in the dream state, it is not generated by the senses. The erroneous conception (*abhimāna*) of the [waking, dream and deep sleep] states in this fashion [as distinct and real] itself is bondage. Erroneous cognition (*bhrama-jñāna*) is called conception, which is just a particular *vr̥tti*. Therefore, *saṃsāra* is nothing but bondage caused by *vr̥tti*. But when, by means of the Vedānta statements, a *vr̥tti* of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* occurs that “*ahaṃ brahmāsmi*, I am Brahman” (*BU* 1.4.10), then the cessation of ignorance along with the worldly creation (*prapañca*) is brought about through this *vr̥tti*, and that itself is liberation. Consequently, in the *saṃsāra*, the purpose of *vr̥ttis* is to establish empirical reality (*vyavahāra-siddhi*), but the highest purpose of a *vr̥tti* is for liberation (*VP* 8.160-1, 436).

⁵⁹⁸ Svāmī Prajñānanda explains *svarūpa-sukha*, “natural pleasure” as *ātmā kā sukha*, “pleasure of the self, *ātmā*” (personal communication).

9.3 Cessation of the Conceived

The cessation of the conceived (*kalpita kī nivṛtti*) occurs in the form of the substratum. To say that the cessation of *saṃsāra* is liberation establishes the fact that Brahman is liberation. Nīścaldās suggests that to consider the cessation of the conceived to be the destruction of the conceived, and then raise the defect (*āpatti*) of duality in liberation [as the *Nyāya-makaranda*⁵⁹⁹ does], is due to ignorance (*ajñāna-prayukta*). Nīścaldās argues that Ānandabodha (ca. 1050-1150 CE), the author of the *Nyāya-makaranda*, has not accepted the cessation of the conceived as being in the form of the substratum, and has also justified (*samādhāna*) the defect of duality, but such a view is not according to experience. Hence, Nīścaldās presents the *Nyāya-makaranda* view at length here (*VP* 8.163-6, 437-41; section 9.3.1), before refuting it (*VP* 8.167-72, 441-5; section 9.3.2).

9.3.1 Ānandabodha's View of the Cessation of the Conceived

Ānandabodha writes that the cessation of the conceived is different from the substratum. If it were said that the cessation were of the form of the substratum, then this would establish that the substratum and the cessation of the conceived are one and the same thing. This raises the issue of whether 1) the disappearance (*lopa*) of the cessation of the conceived is desired after considering it to be included in (*antar-bhāva*) in the substratum or 2) is the disappearance of the substratum desired after considering it to be included in the cessation of the conceived. The inclusion of one within the other will have to be accepted, because any other way is not possible.

Now (1) is not possible because the substratum of *saṃsāra* is Brahman, and if the cessation of *saṃsāra* is not different from Brahman, then there should be no activity (*pravṛtti*) in the means of the cessation of *saṃsāra*. This is because the cessation of *saṃsāra* is not different from Brahman, and Brahman is established (*siddha*). Activity occurs for the sake of functional goals (*vyāpāra-sādhya*), and activity for the sake of knowing the self-established Brahman, such as *śravaṇa*, etc., will not be possible. Therefore, the inclusion of the cessation of *saṃsāra* in the eternally established Brahman is not possible.

Now if it is said, as in (2) above, that Brahman is included in the cessation of *saṃsāra*, then again, due to the delusion of *saṃsāra* [then] not being possible, activity such as *śravaṇa*,

⁵⁹⁹ Ānandabodha Bhaṭṭārākācārya (1907).

etc., should not be possible as the means of its cessation, because it is experientially known that that the cessation of *saṃsāra* occurs in the time subsequent to knowledge; prior to knowledge, the cessation of *saṃsāra* does not occur. But when Brahman is not considered to be separate from the cessation of *saṃsāra*, and Brahman is considered to be included in the cessation of *saṃsāra*, then, prior to knowledge, due to the natural absence of the substratum in the form of Brahman, the delusion of *saṃsāra* is not possible. Further [*saṃsāra* is experientially known and so] *saṃsāra* cannot be said to be absent; it will have to be considered as real, although cessation of a real through knowledge is not possible. Moreover, there is no cessation of *saṃsāra* prior to knowledge, and by its occurring only after knowledge, it has a beginning. But Brahman is without beginning, and therefore, it is unreasonable (*ayukta*) to speak of the inclusion of a beginning-less substance in one that has a beginning. As the inclusion of one by the other is not possible, then the position “the cessation of *saṃsāra* is in the form of Brahman” is not possible.

The following view might be offered. “Although we do not speak of the mutual inclusion of anything, the cessation of the conceived is not separate from the substratum, but rather the cessation of the conceived is a particular state of the substratum. The substratum has two states, known and unknown. Prior to cognition, it is the unknown state, and after cognition, it is the known state. The cessation of the conceived is in the form of the known substratum, and, since the known substratum has a beginning, the means of knowledge such as *śravaṇa*, etc., are not fruitless; so the cessation of *saṃsāra* is not separate from Brahman.” Even if the cessation of *saṃsāra* is considered to be in the form of Brahman, this is still not possible, because the object of knowledge is called “known,” and the object of ignorance is called “unknown.” The concealment-caused ignorance alone is the state of being an object of ignorance, and when the absence of ignorance is brought about by knowledge, functioning as unknown (*ajñāta vyavahāra*) does not remain. Similarly, in the state of being without a body (*videha-dasā*) [i.e., after death, or post-liberation],⁶⁰⁰ as a result of the absence of knowledge occurring due to the absence of the body, etc., the absence of being known (*jñātatā*) is also brought about. Therefore, in the state of being without a body, since there is the absence of the known state too, just like the unknown state, there should also be the absence of the

⁶⁰⁰ It is unclear if Ānandabodha views *mokṣa* as *videha-mukti*, liberation after death, since this is part of his *pūrva-pakṣa*, prima facie argument.

cessation of the conceived in the form of the known substratum in liberation. If absence is accepted in liberation, then, because of the absence of being without end (*anantatā*) in the cessation of the conceived, the highest human pursuit (*puruṣārtha*), i.e., liberation, will not be possible (*abhāva*) similar to the impossibility of the cessation of an illness due to the lack of medicine.

Therefore, it should be accepted that the cessation of the conceived is not of the form of the substratum, but is separate from it, and, although being different from the substratum, it is not a producer of duality because if there were something else real apart from the substratum, then there would be the defect of duality. And, if a substance other than real were to be a cause of duality, the sense that there is always non-duality in Vedānta would be negated. Therefore, the difference from a real substance alone is the cause of duality, but the cessation of the conceived is different from the substratum and is not real, and so duality is not established by this position (*VP* 8.162-4, 436-8).

For the ascertainment of the nature of the cessation of that which is conceived, the alternatives have been presented [in the *Nyāya-makaranda*] in this manner. In considering the cessation of the conceived to be different from the substratum, it is asked whether it is 1) real (*sat*), or 2) false (*asat*), or 3) both real and false (*sad-asat*), or 4) neither real nor false (*sad-asad-vilakṣaṇa*)? Four alternatives thus arise.

From among these, if it be said to be real (1), then is it 1a) empirically real, or 1b) ultimately real? If it is empirically real (1a), then due to the empirically real not being possible after knowledge of Brahman, there ought to be the absence of that cessation of the conceived after the cessation of the conceived, since the empirically real is not negated prior to knowledge of Brahman and its reality (*sattā*) and manifestation (*sphūrṭi*) do not remain after the knowledge of Brahman. Therefore, if the cessation of the conceived is considered to be empirically real, it should not remain possible after knowledge. If it is said to be ultimately real (1b), then the fault of duality is incurred. Therefore, the cessation of the conceived different from the substratum cannot be said to be empirically real (1a) or ultimately real (1b).

With regard to (2), if that cessation of the conceived different from the substratum is said to be false, then does the word 'false' mean *anirvacanīya* or unreal (*tuccha*)? If it is *anirvacanīya*, then the defects about to be raised in refutation of (4) [that the cessation of the

conceived is neither real nor false (*sad-asad-vilakṣaṇa*)] will be present here, and if it is unreal, then the cessation of the conceived will not be a human pursuit (*puruṣārtha*). Thus, even the second option is not possible.

For (3), if that cessation of the conceived is said to be both real and false, then truth and falsity are not possible in one and the same substance due to being in opposition. Even if it is accepted as both real and false, then the aforementioned defects of the true option (1) and of the false option (2) will apply; in the case of the true portion, the cessation of the conceived will have duality, and in the case of the false portion, the human pursuit [of liberation] will cease to be a possibility (*apuruṣārthatā*). The meaning of *sad-asat* might be alternately stated as follows. “Real (*sat*) is the basis of empirical reality, and false (*asat*) is other than ultimate reality. Then with these meanings, *sat* and *asat* do not oppose each other, because the pot, etc., are well known as the basis of empirical reality and other than ultimate reality. Thus, the formerly mentioned opposition no longer applies, and there is also no duality from opposing ultimate reality; although it has empirical reality, it is not unreal (*tuccha*), and consequently the *apuruṣārthatā* does not arise either. In this manner, the cessation of the conceived as different from the substratum lacks ultimate reality and has empirical reality.” If the nature of *sad-asat* is stated thus, then the defect raised against accepting empirical reality in connection with the first option, namely, that “subsequent to knowledge, an empirical substance becomes impossible,” does not make the above sense of *sad-asat* possible either. That being the case, (3) is also not possible.

Now, if, as stated in (4), the cessation of the conceived as different from the substratum is said to be other than real or false (*sad-asad-vilakṣaṇa*), then by saying it is other than real, the defect of duality does not arise, and, by saying it is other than false, the defect of *apuruṣārthatā* also does not arise. However, this option is also not possible because that which is other than real and false is *anirvacanīya*, and so it will be established that “the cessation of the conceived is *anirvacanīya*.” But *anirvacanīya* denotes *māyā* and its effects. Now, if the cessation of *saṃsāra* along with ignorance also is *anirvacanīya*, then the cessation of the manifest creation (*prapañca*), along with ignorance will similarly have to be considered as *māyā* or its effect, but this statement will be laughable (*hāsyāspada*) since it resembles the statement “the cessation of the pot is like a pot.” Further, Vedānta establishes (*siddhānta*) that, when the cessation of the manifest creation along with [the cessation of]

ignorance occurs due to the knowledge of Brahman, no apparatus remains for the accomplishment of the *puruṣārthas*. The result of the knowledge of Brahman, which is the cessation of the conceived, if it is of the form of *māyā* or its effect, should leave nothing remaining to remove it. Then, in the state of liberation, due to the eternal relation with *māyā* and its effect, there will be the absence of liberation in the form of attaining the unqualified Brahman. Hence, the fourth option is also not possible.

Accordingly, ignorance and the cessation of its effect are different from Brahman, but they are not real, so there is no duality. The cessation of the conceived is not false; therefore, there is no *apuruṣārthatā*. It is not both real and false; therefore, the defects of both alternatives are not incurred. It is also not “neither real nor false, *anirvacanīya*,” and so, in the state of liberation, ignorance and its effects do not remain. In this manner, the cessation of the conceived is separate from the substratum, but it is other than the four options above. Therefore, in the *Nyāya-makaranda*, a fifth type of cessation of the conceived is described, which is different from the [previous] four. “Just as the substance different from real and false has been defined as *anirvacanīya* in Advaita, in our view the cessation of the conceived is different from all the four types: real, false, both real and false, neither real nor false, i.e., it is a fifth type which is different from the four options” (*VP* 8.165-6, 439-41).

9.3.2 Nīścaldās Refutation of Ānandabodha

According to Nīścaldās, the *Nyāya-makaranda* view is not correct, because substances (*padārtha*) that are empirically real are well known in the world, and *anirvacanīya* substances caused by magic (*indrajāla-kṛta*) are also well known. Similarly, Brahman, the ultimate real substance, is well known in the *śāstras* and it is also experientially known by wise persons (*vidvān*). But no entity different from all these is known, either in the world or in the *śāstra*; so, if the cessation of the conceived is considered to be extremely unknown, then the human pursuits (*puruṣārthatā*) will not be possible (*abhāva*). The object of a person’s desire is called a human goal (*puruṣārtha*), and nobody desires something that is completely unknown; everyone tends to desire the known. Therefore, the cessation of the conceived cannot be different from well-known substances. Although when the cessation of the conceived is considered in the form of the substratum, Brahman that is the substratum of *saṃsāra* is not well known since it is not experienced by all; nevertheless, it is not the rule

that there should only be a desire for that which is previously experienced. One desires that which is similar to what has been experienced [and also has been heard from the teacher and scriptures that are trustworthy].⁶⁰¹ Just as the cessation of the snake which is the meaningless cause of fear is the substratum in the form of the rope, similarly, the cessation of *saṃsāra* which is the meaningless cause of birth, death, etc., is the substratum in the form of Brahman. The desire of a person for the cessation of *saṃsāra* is possible because is similar to that which is experienced. But, in the view of the one who holds to the fifth type, that type is neither experienced nor is it similar to anything [well known]; therefore, it is not possible for it to be the object of any person's desire. Along with this, if the cessation of the conceived is considered to be different from the substratum, then Śaṅkara's [*bhāṣyakāra*] words will be opposed since he has stated that the cessation of the conceived is in the form of the substratum alone (*VP* 8.167, 441).

The author of the *Nyāya-makaranda* had raised the defect regarding acceptance of the cessation of the conceived as in the form of the known substratum, namely, that "there will be the re-arising of the conceived due to the absence of the cessation of the conceived occurring in the state of liberation from the absence of known-ness (*jñātatva*) in the state of liberation." Nīścaldās provides the resolution of this defect as follows.⁶⁰² At the time of liberation, Brahman is neither qualified (*viśiṣṭa*) nor limited by (*upahita*) known-ness. That which possesses the attribute of known-ness is called *jñātatva-viśiṣṭa*, and that which has the *upādhi* of *jñātatva* is called *jñātatva-upahita*. That which is related to the effect and distinguishes the present (*vartamāna vyāvartaka*)⁶⁰³ is called an attribute/qualifier (*viśeṣaṇa*). For example, in the case of "the blue-colored pot is created," the "blue-colored" is the attribute of the pot, because the blue color is related to the pot effect (*kārya*), and, since it is present in the pot, it distinguishes the pot from the yellow pot. That which is not related to the effect and excludes the present (*vartamāna vyāvartaka*)⁶⁰⁴ is called the *upādhi*. For

⁶⁰¹ Parenthetical explanation by Ātmānand Muni (Nīścaldās 1957, 618): *tathā śraddheya guru-śāstra ke dvārā śravaṇa kiye hue meṃ bhī abhilāṣā huā kartī hai*.

⁶⁰² I have chosen to leave many of the terms in this discussion untranslated past the first few times that they are explained. This is a highly terminology-laden explanation which loses its force and comprehensibility when presented fully in translation.

⁶⁰³ See n. 604.

⁶⁰⁴ *vyāvartaka* has both senses, of distinguishing and excluding. It seems more meaningful to translate the same phrase differently in the two cases. Possible senses of the term: separating, removing, excluding, excepting, distinguishing, distinctive, turning away from, encircling, encompassing (*MW*).

example, in the case of “sound occurs in the space limited by the kettle-drum (*bherī*),” the kettle-drum is the *upādhi* of space, because the drum is not related to the substratum of sound, and the kettle drum which is present excludes the space in it from the external space. That which is not related to the effect and excludes is called a mere designating expression (*upalakṣaṇa*). An *upalakṣaṇa* is not required to be present since it can also be past (*atīta*), and, whereas an *upādhi* is in all locations of the qualificand, the *upalakṣaṇa* occurs in only one location. For example, on hearing “*kākavat gr̥he gaccha*, go to the house with the crow [perched on it],” one goes to the house where the connection with a crow was seen, even if the crow [subsequently] flies away from the house. Here the crow is the *upalakṣaṇa* of the house since it is not related to the activity (*kārya*) of going, but it indicates the house, and the present or past crow excludes that house from others. The difference between the three is best conveyed via a table:

	<i>viśeṣaṇa</i> , attribute	<i>upādhi</i> , “limiting adjunct”	<i>upalakṣaṇa</i> , designator
Part of the effect?	✓	✗	✗
Present with the effect at all times & places?	✓	✓	✗
Distinguishes or excludes the effect?	✓	✓	✓
<i>vyāvartaka</i> :: <i>vyāvṛtta</i> , differentiator :: differentiated terminology	<i>viśeṣaṇa</i> :: <i>viśiṣṭa</i> , qualifier :: qualificand	<i>upādhi</i> :: <i>upahita</i> , conditioner :: conditioned	<i>upalakṣaṇa</i> :: <i>upalakṣita</i> , designator :: designated
<i>vyāvartaka</i> :: <i>vyāvṛtta</i> example	pot :: pot-color	drum :: space enclosed	crow :: house

Table 3: Types of *vyāvṛtti*, differentiation

Thus, the attribute and the *upādhi* are present, and they occur in all locations and times of the qualificand. In the place and time of the qualificand, when and where they do not occur, their qualifying and conditioning functions also do not occur. In the times and places from which they are excluded (*vyāvartaka*), their qualifying and conditioning functions occur only there and then. In the state of liberation there is no present relation with known-ness (*jñātatva*), but the attribute of known-ness (*jñātatva*) has occurred formerly. Therefore, although the substratum is not qualified (*viśiṣṭa*) or conditioned (*upahita*) by *jñātatva*, it is however designated (*upalakṣita*) by *jñātatva*. This is because an *upalakṣaṇa* is that which only excludes but is not required to be present, and thus, by having a relation with the qualificand in one place or at one time, that which excludes can still be called an *upalakṣaṇa*.

The cognition of difference from other substances is called differentiation (*vyāvṛtti*). Thus, an attribute (*viśeṣaṇa*), *upādhi*, and designator (*upalakṣaṇa*), all three bring about differentiation (*vyāvṛtti*). Of these, in all the times and places that the *viśeṣaṇa* is present, it provides *vyāvṛtti* of the qualificand along with itself, and that for which *vyāvṛtti* occurs by means of a *viśeṣaṇa*, is called a *viśiṣṭa*, qualified. In all the times and places where the *vyāvartaka* is present, when it provides *vyāvṛtti* of that which is also present in those times and places while itself remaining external, it [the *vyāvartaka*] is called the *upādhi*, and that for which *vyāvṛtti* occurs by means of an *upādhi* is called the *upahita*, conditioned. That which is present in one place at some time for the object to be excluded (*vyāvartanīya*), and provides *vyāvṛtti* of the object while remaining external like an *upādhi*, is called an *upalakṣaṇa*, and the object of which *vyāvṛtti* occurs by means of an *upalakṣaṇa* is called an *upalakṣita*, that which is designated. In summary, by combining both the *vyāvartaka* and the *vyāvartanīya*, a qualifying (*viśiṣṭa*) function occurs. In all the places where the *vyāvartaka* is present, the *upahita* function occurs only in the *vyāvartanīya* present in those places, but this function occurs only by forsaking the *vyāvartaka* in the time it is present (*sadbhāva-kāla*). Where the *vyāvartaka* is sometimes present in one location of the *vyāvartanīya*, there the *upalakṣita* function occurs only in the *vyāvartanīya*, and there is no requirement for the presence of the *vyāvartaka*. In this manner, the cognizer qualified (*viśiṣṭa*) by the *antaḥ-karaṇa*, the individual witness (*jīva-sākṣī*) conditioned (*upahita*) by the *antaḥ-karaṇa*, and the Īśvara as witness designated (*upalakṣita*) by the *antaḥ-karaṇa*, occur with the difference(s) of these *viśeṣaṇa*, etc. The connection here is that, although in the state of liberation, due to the absence of *jñātatva*, it is not possible for the substratum to be qualified by (*viśiṣṭa*) or conditioned by (*upahita*) *jñātatva*, nevertheless, it still remains *jñātatva-upalakṣita*, designated by known-ness in that state (*VP* 8.168, 442-3).

The proponent of the cessation of the conceived being of the fifth kind might raise the following doubt. “If an entity which may sometimes have known-ness (*jñātatva*) is considered to be designated by known-ness even when known-ness is absent, then, even in the time prior to known-ness, considering the imminent (*bhāvē*) known-ness in the entity, it should be considered to be designated by known-ness. Now if it is thus considered, then due to the cessation of *saṃsāra* being present in the form of the substratum designated by known-

ness, even in the time of *saṃsāra*, one will easily attain the *puruṣārtha*. Therefore, it is not appropriate to speak of the cessation of the conceived in the form of the substratum designated by known-ness when known-ness is absent.” The resolution of this doubt is as follows. The function of designation [lit. designated function, *upalakṣita vyavahāra*] only occurs subsequent to the relation with the differentiator (*vyāvartaka*), never in the time prior to it. Just as it is only in the time subsequent to the [house’s] relation with the crow that the function of being designated by the crow occurs, similarly the substratum cannot be said to be designated by known-ness in the state of *saṃsāra* prior to the arising of known-ness. But subsequent to the known-ness, even in its absence, the substratum can be called designated by known-ness, and its nature is the cessation of *saṃsāra* (*VP* 8.169-70, 444).

If the view that “the cessation of the conceived is different from the substratum” is insisted upon, then to accept the extremely unknown (*aprasiddha*) fifth type, as posited by the author of the *Nyāya-makaranda*, is certainly fruitless since the cessation of the conceived, i.e., the *anirvacanīya*, is also *anirvacanīya* itself. Cessation is the name of destruction (*dhvaṃsa*). If that destruction is considered to be endless absence and also different from the substratum, then there will be duality in the state of liberation. But in actuality, that destruction is not endless absence; it is of the form of momentary modifications of being (*bhāva-vikāra*). In Yāska’s *Nirukta* portion [lit. limb, *aṅga*] of the Vedas,⁶⁰⁵ six modifications of being have been stated: birth, existence, change (*pariṇāma*), growth (*vardhana*), decay (*apakṣaya*), and destruction.⁶⁰⁶ Being (*bhāva*) means an *anirvacanīya* entity; its modifications indicate particular states. All the states, beginning with birth through destruction, are *anirvacanīya*, since they are particular states of an *anirvacanīya* entity. For example, the state of birth is momentary, because the relation of an entity with its first instant is called birth. Therefore, only in the first instant does the function “*jāyate*, it is born/created” occur, but, in the second and subsequent instants, the function “*jātaḥ*, it was born/created” occurs, and never “it is born”. Similarly, when the pot gets crushed by a hammer, only in the first instant does the function “*ghaṭo naśyati*, the pot is destroyed” occur; from the second instant onwards, only the function “*naṣṭo ghaṭaḥ*, the pot was destroyed” occurs, never “the

⁶⁰⁵ Yāska (600-500 BCE) is a Sanskrit grammarian prior to Pāṇini, the *Nirukta* is a work on etymology and semantics.

⁶⁰⁶ *Nirukta* 1.2: “*ṣaḍ-bhāva-vikārā bhavantīti vārṣyāyaṇīḥ. jāyate asti vipariṇāmate vardhate apakṣīyate vinaśyati*. Per Vārṣyāyaṇī, there are six modifications of being: birth, existence, change, maturing, decay, destruction” (Sarup 1984, 3:29).

pot is destroyed.” In this manner, birth and destruction are momentary, meaning that, by the sentence, “the pot is born,” the present birth of the pot is apprehended, and by the sentence, “the pot was born,” its past birth is apprehended. Similarly, by the sentence, “the pot is destroyed,” the present destruction of the pot, and by the sentence, “the pot was destroyed,” the past destruction of the pot, are apprehended. If the destruction were endless, then destruction should have the function of past-ness (*atītatva*). Therefore, destruction is not endless, but momentary and is a positive (*bhāva-rūpa*) modification. In the description of the means of non-cognition (*anupalabdhi pramāṇa*), the endless, non-existence (*abhāva-rūpa*) of destruction represents the Nyāya view. For Vedānta, however, there is only one non-existent substance, and that is absolute non-existence (*atyantābhāva*). Thus, the cessation of the conceived is also momentary and *anirvacanīya* alone. Just as the *anirvacanīya* body, etc., of the wise person persist for some time after knowledge on the strength of already commenced (*prārabdha*) *karma* and is not a means of duality, similarly, the cessation of the conceived remains for only one instant after knowledge and is not a means of duality. After one instant, the absolute absence of the cessation of the conceived occurs, and it is in the form of Brahman (*VP* 8.171, 444-5).

In this view, the cessation of sorrow cannot be called a human pursuit (*puruṣārtha*), since [the cessation of sorrow] is existent only momentarily. Only happiness (*sukha*) can be a *puruṣārtha*, because, by nature, all *jīvas* engage in the pleasures of sexual intercourse (*grāmya-dharma*), etc., which are accompanied by endless sorrow. If only the absence of sorrow were the object of a person’s desire, then a person should not have desire for the pleasure that is totally eclipsed (*grasita*) by sorrow. Where there is a desire for the absence of sorrow, there too sorrow is considered the obstruction of the experience of natural happiness, and when it is absent, the natural happiness manifests. Consequently, the desire of a person for the absence of sorrow also occurs for the sake of natural happiness alone, and thus, the principal *puruṣārtha* is not the absence of sorrow, but only happiness. Therefore, if even the absolute absence of sorrow is not considered to be the nature of Brahman and is only considered to be *anirvacanīya*, then the negation [of absolute absence of sorrow] is also possible. But absence in the form of the negation of the *anirvacanīya* is experientially known to be of the form of the substratum. Therefore, along with ignorance, the visible creation in the form of existence and non-existence as well as its cessation, all are *anirvacanīya*, and the

negation of them all, in the form of the substratum, is liberation, which is of the nature of non-duality, ultimate happiness (*paramānanda*) and the highest *puruṣārtha* (*VP* 8.172, 445-6). With this, the *VP* concludes.⁶⁰⁷

9.4 Chapter Summary

According to Advaita doctrine, the cessation of ignorance and its effects is brought about by Brahman-realization (*tattva-jñāna*). In this chapter, we examined the form that is taken by the removal of ignorance and attainment of Brahman-realization. Brahman-realization is the *vr̥tti* of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* in regard to the identity of *jīva* and Brahman, and the *antaḥ-karaṇa* is an effect of ignorance; therefore, Brahman-realization in the form of the *antaḥ-karaṇa*'s *vr̥tti* is also an effect of ignorance. Since the cause and effect do not mutually oppose one another, how can one speak of the cessation of ignorance by means of Brahman-realization? Nīścaldās reminds us that the universal (*sāmānya*) rule that the cause and effect do not mutually oppose one another is negated by the particular (*viśeṣa*) rule that cognition and ignorance, having the same object, mutually oppose each other. Thus, the destruction of ignorance, along with its effects, can be brought about by the ignorance-caused *vr̥tti*-cognition, which takes the form of Brahman-realization.

If ignorance is completely destroyed by Brahman-realization, then the body of the wise person, who becomes liberated while living (*jīvan-mukta*) through Brahman-realization, should cease to exist, because the persistence of the body, the effect, is not possible on the destruction of ignorance, the material cause. However, even after Brahman-realization has occurred, the wise person's body persists until the fruition of the commenced (*prārabdha*) karma, and therefore, even upon Brahman-realization, some authors hold that a trace (*leśa*) of ignorance still remains. Sarvajñātman disagrees; for him, there is no trace ignorance post-knowledge, and the statements propounding *jīvan-mukti* are not literal but instead praise the power of listening to teachings about *ātmā* (*ātmā-śravaṇa*) and the fact that one gets liberated even while alive. Nīścaldās disagrees with Sarvajñātman's view as it contradicts a knower's

⁶⁰⁷ The text concludes with: “*iti śrīman-nīścaldāsa-saṃjñaka-sādhuviracite vr̥ttiprabhākare jīveśvara-svarūpa-nirūpaṇa-pūrvaka-vr̥tti-prayojana-nirūpaṇa-sahita-kalpita-nivṛtti-svarūpa-nirūpaṇaṃ nāmāṣṭama prakāśaḥ*. So concludes the eighth chapter of the *Vṛttiprabhākara*, named the description of the nature of the cessation of the conceived, along with the description of the use of *vr̥tti*, preceded by the description of the nature of *jīva* and *Īśvara*, written by the *sādhuviracite* named Nīścaldās. *samāpto 'yaṃ gr̥anthaḥ*. This text is concluded” (*VP* 8, 446). The published colophon is identical to that found in the manuscript (Nīścaladāsa 1868, 8.41).

experience wherein, by means of Brahman-realization, first, the cessation of ignorance occurs along with its effects and, in the following instant, Brahman-realization also ceases. If, according to Sarvajñātman, there is no trace ignorance left, then, after Brahman-realization, only non-attached consciousness will remain, and the cessation of Brahman-realization will no longer be possible. Nīscaldās suggests that when the cessation of ignorance with its effects takes place, as there is no other object left suitable for cessation, the cessation of Brahman-realization also occurs without requiring any other means for its cessation. It is analogous to when adding burning charcoal to a grass heap; the grass heap is reduced to ashes, and the charcoal is also reduced to ashes along with the grass. According to Padmapāda, knowledge opposes only ignorance but not its effects. Thus, only the cessation of ignorance occurs from Brahman-realization, and, in the instant following the cessation of ignorance, due to the absence of the material cause, its effect ceases by itself. However, as long as trace ignorance remains in the form of *prārabdha karma*, the body persists; but when the *prārabdha karma* obstruction becomes absent, the body and Brahman-realization both cease.

There are two means for the Brahman-realization by which the cessation of ignorance takes place. According to all Advaita texts, 1) for the best aspirant (*uttama adhikārī*), *śravaṇa*, and the rest alone are the means; and 2) for the middling aspirant (*madhyama adhikārī*) the contemplation of the self as attribute-less (*nirguṇa*) Brahman (*aham-graha upāsanā*) is a means of Brahman-realization. But several authors hold that in both alternatives, continued meditation (*prasaṅkhyāna*) is solely the means as an instrument for Brahman-realization. A continuous stream of *vṛttis* is called *prasaṅkhyāna*. Just as the middling aspirant is required to perform contemplation of a continuous *vṛtti* in the form of attribute-less Brahman, and that in itself is considered *prasaṅkhyāna* for that aspirant, similarly for the best aspirant too, after reflection (*manana*), *prasaṅkhyāna* in the form of *nididhyāsana* is the means for immediate cognition of Brahman. *Prasaṅkhyāna* is not a means of cognition (*pramāṇa*), but verbal testimony (*śabda-pramāṇa*) is the source of continuous meditation in the form of *nididhyāsana*; therefore, the knowledge of Brahman is a valid cognition. But Vācaspati Mīśra, author of the *Bhāmātī*, holds that *prasaṅkhyāna* assists the mind, although *prasaṅkhyāna* as a means for Brahman-realization is not established. Meditation on Brahman with and without attributes also assists the mind, but the mind alone

is the means of their immediate cognition. However, the principal opinion of Advaita texts is that the immediate perception of non-dual Brahman occurs via the *mahā-vākyas* themselves, and, immediately after this, there is no need for *prasāṅkhyāna*. The mind is an accessory in the knowledge of Brahman, together with one-pointedness caused by *nididhyāsana*; but the means for the knowledge of Brahman are the words in the form of the Vedānta statements alone. Even those who consider the immediate perception of Brahman to be mental accept the fact that the mediate (*parokṣa*) knowledge of Brahman occurs by *śabda* alone. Therefore, in both views, the instrumentality of *śabda* in knowledge of Brahman is essential, and *śabda* alone, not the mind, is the instrument of the direct perception of Brahman.

Since *śabda* has the capacity for producing only mediate knowledge, the production of immediate knowledge through *śabda* is not possible. Yet, after performing *śravaṇa* as described in the *śāstras*, immediate knowledge pertaining to Brahman can arise via *śabda* qualified by the impressions (*samskāra*) of mediate knowledge and accompanied by one-pointed consciousness. The immediate knowledge of Brahman is possible only through *śabda*, when assisted by a pure, steady mind qualified by the impressions of the knowledge of Brahman. *Śruti* speaks of the cessation of all suffering in the form of superimposition, which occurs through the knowledge of Brahman. Because superimpositions such as agency (*kartṛtva*), etc., are immediate, the cessation of these superimpositions can only be brought about by the immediate knowledge of Brahman. Since the immediate superimpositions do not cease without the knowledge of Brahman, and the other means of cognition do not pertain to Brahman, the immediate knowledge of Brahman is proven to occur only through *śabda*, as a result of postulation on the basis of what is heard (*śrutārthāpatti*).

Alternatively, immediacy is dependent on the object, and not on the means of cognition. Therefore, the cognition of an immediate object is immediate itself, whether it occurs via the senses or by other means of cognition. The producer of immediacy or mediacy in the object is the identity or difference between the cognizer-consciousness and the object consciousness. Brahman-consciousness is always immediate because the cognizer-consciousness is always identical to Brahman-consciousness, and so the knowledge of Brahman produced by the verbal testimony (*śabda pramāṇa*) in the form of the *mahā-vākyas* is also considered to be immediate. The means of cognition is also required to be appropriate

for providing immediate cognition. Upaniṣadic subsidiary statements do not have the capability of producing immediate cognition; only the *mahā-vākyas* have this capability.

Niścaldās offers a definition for an immediate object free from key defects based on that of Advaita-vidyācārya: an immediate object is the identity of the unconcealed object with consciousness favorable (*anukūla*) to its function (*vyavahāra*). The definition of immediate cognition is the identity of consciousness suitable to its function with the unconcealed object. Since the identity of *jīva* with Brahman is ever-present, even with the identity of concealed Brahman with consciousness suitable to its function in the state of *saṃsāra*, since Brahman is concealed, there is no identity of the object as unconcealed Brahman with consciousness suitable to its function. Therefore, the immediacy of Brahman does not occur. Similarly, since knowledge caused by the subsidiary Upaniṣadic statements is identical with the object in the form of concealed Brahman, immediacy does not apply to this knowledge.

Three questions were presented at the start of *VP*: 1) What is the nature of a *vr̥tti*? 2) What (lit. who, *kaun*) is the cause of a *vr̥tti*? 3) What is the use and result of a *vr̥tti*? A *vr̥tti* was generally defined as “the modification of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* and ignorance, in the form of illumination,” and then its particular nature was described via its differences, based on truth (*yathārthatva*), falsity (*ayathārthatva*), etc. Through the description of the means of cognition, the nature of the cause of a *vr̥tti* was also stated. Now Niścaldās answers the third question, pertaining to the purpose of a *vr̥tti*. The relation of the *jīva* with all three states (waking, dreaming, and deep sleep) occurs by means of a *vr̥tti*, and the attainment of liberation (lit. *puruṣārtha*) is also by means of a *vr̥tti*. The waking state is defined as the basis (*ādhāra*) for sense-caused cognition and the impressions (*saṃskāra*) of sense-caused cognition, and different from the dream and deep sleep states. Thus, the function of the waking state is dependent on sense-caused cognition, which is in the form of a *vr̥tti* of the *antaḥ-karaṇa*. According to some, the use of a *vr̥tti* is to overcome concealment. By the relation of an immediate *vr̥tti* or by consciousness qualified by an immediate *vr̥tti*, a portion of primordial ignorance is destroyed, but, in the absence of the *vr̥tti*, ignorance spreads again. The purpose of an immediate *vr̥tti* is to destroy of a portion of ignorance, and that of the mediate *vr̥tti* is the destruction of the portion of ignorance causing non-existence (*asattvāpādaka*). In another view, the purpose of a *vr̥tti* is to relate the individual

consciousness with the object. Where the *jīva* is considered to be the reflection of collective, primordial ignorance, although the relation of the *jīva*-consciousness with the object is always present, nevertheless the capability of the pot, etc., to assume the reflection of the *jīva*-consciousness comes only from the relation with a *ṛtti*. The *ṛtti* is the cause of the differing relation of the *jīva*-consciousness with the pot, etc., and the object is illumined by that relation. Where the *jīva* is considered to be consciousness qualified by the *antaḥ-karaṇa*, the *jīva* does not have any relation with the pot, etc., without the *ṛtti*, but when, by the relation of the senses and the object, the *ṛtti* of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* goes towards the object, then the relation of the *jīva*-consciousness occurs with the pot, etc. Here, the *ṛtti* is purely for the sake of the relation with the object. Whether the *jīva*'s *upādhi* is considered pervasive or delimited, in both the views the relation of the cognizer with the object is the same, dependent on the *ṛtti* alone.

The state of the immediate (*aparokṣa*) *ṛtti* of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* pertaining to an object, which is not caused by the senses, is called the dream state. In the dream, the cognition and the cognizer are the modifications of the *antaḥ-karaṇa*. The state of the *ṛtti* pertaining to pleasure and ignorance (*avidyā*) in the form of the immediate (*sākṣāt*) modification of ignorance (*ajñāna*) is called the deep sleep state because in deep sleep only the *ṛttis* pertaining to pleasure and ignorance occur. In deep sleep, the witness seated in the *ṛtti* of ignorance illuminates the ignorance and the pleasure that is its nature (*svarūpa-sukha*). The person's *antaḥ-karaṇa* becomes absorbed (*līna*) in the portion of ignorance that has been modified into pleasure in deep sleep and resides there. Then, at the time of waking, that portion of ignorance gets modified into the *antaḥ-karaṇa*. Therefore, in the waking state, the pleasure experienced in deep sleep is recollected by means of a *ṛtti* of ignorance.

The conception (*abhimāna*) of the three states in this fashion itself is bondage. Erroneous cognition (*bhrama-jñāna*) is called conception, which is just a particular *ṛtti*. Therefore, *saṃsāra* is nothing but bondage caused by *ṛtti*. When, by means of the Vedānta statements, a *ṛtti* of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* occurs that “*ahaṃ brahmāsmi*, I am Brahman” (*BU* 1.4.10), then the cessation of ignorance along with the worldly creation (*prapañca*) is brought about through this *ṛtti*, and that itself is liberation. Thus, in the *saṃsāra*, the purpose of *ṛttis* is for

the establishing of empirical reality, whereas the highest purpose of a *vr̥tti* is for liberation, i.e., knowing absolute reality.

The cessation of the conceived is in the form of the known substratum. To say that the cessation of *saṃsāra* is liberation establishes that Brahman is liberation. At the time of liberation, Brahman is not qualified (*viśiṣṭa*) by or limited by (*upahita*) known-ness (*jñātatva*). In the state of liberation, there is no present relation with known-ness (*jñātatva*), but the attribute (*jñātatva*) has occurred previously, and therefore, although the substratum is not qualified (*viśiṣṭa*) or conditioned (*upahita*) by *jñātatva*, it is however designated (*upalakṣita*) by *jñātatva*. The substratum cannot be said to be designated by known-ness in the state of *saṃsāra*, prior to the arising of known-ness. But subsequent to the known-ness, even in its absence, the substratum can be designated by known-ness, and its nature is the cessation of *saṃsāra*. The cessation of the conceived, i.e., the *anirvacanīya*, is also *anirvacanīya* itself, and momentary. The cessation of the conceived remains for only one instant after knowledge, and is not a means of duality. After one instant, the absolute absence of that cessation of the conceived occurs, and that is in the form of Brahman. This cessation of the conceived, i.e., the cessation of sorrow, cannot be called a human pursuit (*puruṣārtha*) since it exists only momentarily. If only the absence of sorrow were the object of a person's desire, then a person would not have desire for pleasure that is totally eclipsed by sorrow. A person's desire for the absence of sorrow also occurs only for the sake of attaining the happiness that is one's nature. Therefore, the principal *puruṣārtha* is not the absence of sorrow but only happiness. Ignorance, the visible creation in the form of existence and non-existence, as well as their cessation, all are *anirvacanīya*. The negation of them all is liberation in the form of the substratum, and that is of the nature of non-duality, ultimate happiness (*paramānanda*) and the highest *puruṣārtha*.

10 Conclusion

The biographical sources for Swāmī Nīscaldās suggest that he was a learned yet simple, unworldly man, a staunch Advaitin without any interest in fame or fortune. After his mother passed away when he was thirteen or fourteen, he was raised among the Dādū Panth, and, as discussed in sections 3.4.3, 3.5-3.6, 4.3, and 4.6, he was most certainly influenced by their ideas of religious tolerance and disregard of caste. From the age of fourteen or fifteen he devoted himself to the pursuit of knowledge and went to study Sanskrit in Benares. Due to earlier experiences of caste-discrimination, he is said to have kept his Jāt caste secret from his teachers, who otherwise would have not taught him Sanskrit, Nyāya and Vedānta. Hagiographic accounts state that when he confessed his true caste to his teacher, Pt. Kākārām, who had offered Nīscaldās his daughter's hand in marriage, Kākārām cursed Nīscaldās to suffer every day from a fever. According to the *Dādū Panth Paricay*, Nīscaldās began to recite the *Dādū Vāṇī* daily to gain relief from this affliction. Even if one discounts these accounts as fanciful, it is quite plausible that Nīscaldās encountered caste-discrimination; if true, this would certainly have influenced his stance against caste as evident in his writings and possibly also his choice to write in the vernacular.

10.1 Patronage

There is no proof that the content of Nīscaldās's writings was influenced by his patron, Rājā Rāmsiṃha of Būndī, Rajasthan. However, there is documentary evidence, in the form of several letters from the Rājā to Nīscaldās reproduced by Raṇjīt Siṃha (1981, 10-13), that Rāmsiṃha was indeed a patron of Nīscaldās, but non-hagiographic sources, such as the historian of Rajasthan, Gahlot (1960), do not make direct mention of the connection.⁶⁰⁸ The Rājā was reputed to be a Sanskrit scholar and a staunch traditionalist, and Būndī, with more than forty Sanskrit schools, was well known as a second Benares under his reign. Yet this scholar-king was ruthless and iron-fisted, killing or imprisoning members of his own family to strengthen his own power. He was an opportunist who secured close relationships with the ruling British colonial regime, and yet he would promptly bathe after contact with them. Under his reign, the kingdom of Būndī paid more than a tenth of its revenue to the British, and in return, Queen Victoria appointed him a Knight

⁶⁰⁸ Gahlot only mentions that Nīscaldās, the author of *VS*, was coterminous: “*dādūpanthī sādhu nīscaldās vicārsāgar nāmak vedānt granth ke racayitā insī ke samay meṃ huā thā.*” (1960, 100). Due to the ambiguous wording, it is unclear if Gahlot is implying that Rāmsiṃha commissioned *VS*, or is simply referring to Nīscaldās as the author of *VS*. Patronage is implied, however, since this sentence follows one which mentions Sūryamalla Miśra as dependent on the king for patronage.

Grand Commander of the Order of the Star of India (KGCSI) in 1878. But Rāmsiṃha instituted reforms in his kingdom, banning traditional animal sacrifices, female infanticide, and the mistreatment and abuse of aged women. He commissioned his court poet, Sūryamalla Miśra, to write an epic narrative of his Cauhān lineage, similar to the *Mahābhārata* but specifically in the vernacular in order that it might be widely understood. It is not unlikely that Rāmsiṃha and his family considered Niścaldās as their Vedānta teacher. It is quite possible that Rāmsiṃha requested that he write works in the vernacular for the benefit of the common person and just as likely that the king also requested that he write a text that would be equally appreciated by a learned, Sanskrit speaking audience, as is reported by Pt. Pītāmbār (1917, 7).

Hagiographers often try to elevate the prestige of their subject by claiming royal patronage, and Pt. Pītāmbār is certainly biased in favor of Niścaldās. However, the association between Niścaldās and Rāmsiṃha, particularly regarding the *VP*, is strengthened by two facts. 1) In the correspondence from Dayārām to the king on the event of Niścaldās's death, Dayārām responds to Rāmsiṃha's query as to whether and *sādhūs* (holy men) had heard the *VP* directly from Niścaldās. It is likely that Rāmsiṃha was inquiring as to the status of the text, as Dayārām goes on to provide a report on the same and appears to ask for the king's assistance in compiling the final version of the text.⁶⁰⁹ 2) In the colophon to the last chapter of the *VP* in the only manuscript available to me, the scribes, Nārāyaṇa Trikam and Līlādhār Odhav report that they "researched the text over at the esteemed (*nirmala*) Lord Rāmsiṃha's [place], at the request of Swāmī Trilokrām" and had the text published in Mumbai (Niśchaladāsa 1868, 8.41).⁶¹⁰ But it is not the least bit surprising that Niścaldās totally neglected to acknowledge his patron in any of his extant three Vedānta works. He states in the invocatory verses, *maṅgala dohās*, at the start of *VS*, that since he [Niścaldās] is pure, boundless Brahman, in which all of creation occurs, whom should he prayerfully bow down to (*VS* vv. 1.1-5)?⁶¹¹ One gets the impression that Niścaldās was being true to his uncompromising understanding of non-duality, and everything he wrote appears to stem consistently from that. Patronage by the king must have been welcome, but its lack would not have bothered Niścaldās in the least. One is reminded of the anecdote about Niścaldās's successor, Manīrām, and the British tax assessor recounted in section 2.7 above. When the

⁶⁰⁹ See n. 617, p. 366.

⁶¹⁰ See n. 79, p. 32, and also Appendix 3, Figure 13 on p. 421.

⁶¹¹ The verses have been presented in abridged form here. See section 3.8, p. 65.

assessor asked Manīrām what he would do if his meager wealth were exhausted by his charity, Manīrām is said to have replied that he, too, would then go stand in line with the poor who queued at his door for charity.

10.2 Influence of the Dādū Panth

Evidence for a greater influence on Nīscaldās and his decision to write in the vernacular is found in the non-sectarian teachings of Dādū Dayāl, the founder of the Dādū Panth to which he belonged. As in the case of Nīscaldās, much of what we know about Dādū is from hagiographic accounts. As section 3.7 showed, all but one of the fourteen commonly found hagiographic tropes enumerated by W. L. Smith (2000, iii) are present in Dādū's biographical account. In comparison, an additional three tropes are absent in Nīscaldās's account, one is only faintly present and the remaining nine of the fourteen common hagiographical tropes are only mildly present (see Table 1 on p. 63). This shows us that, as compared to Dādū, Nīscaldās had a much lower profile among their respective followers. This is perfectly understandable when one takes into account the fact that Nīscaldās's profound self-identification with the *advaita* Brahman is not as amenable to the attention and adulation of potential followers and hagiographers, especially when compared to the eloquent and charismatic devotee of *nirguṇa* Brahman, Dādū Dayāl. The purpose of hagiographies is to present the teacher's life as a testimony of his superior doctrine and as a role model to emulate. Dādū challenged the orthodoxies of his time, both Hindu and Islamic, by advocating a direct relationship with the divine, not dependent on religion, teachers, scripture or caste. In contrast, Nīscaldās did not challenge orthodoxy to the same degree as Dādū; he made the uncompromising doctrine of Advaita Vedānta accessible in the vernacular and, while doing so, presented a cogent assessment that evaluated centuries of viewpoints about the doctrine, both for and against, and provided a definitive version showing which thinkers were consistent with the doctrine, and which were not. He presented the core of Advaita in the vernacular so that one did not have to know Sanskrit and be immersed in the tradition in order to understand and assimilate it. While Nīscaldās was highly respected and sought after as a teacher, his life and acts did not lend themselves to hagiographic purposes for three reasons. a) Nīscaldās did not offer a new doctrine; what he presented in his works had already been stated by Śaṅkarācārya in the seventh century, and even earlier, by the authors of *śruti*. b) The superiority of Advaita Vedānta had also been argued by numerous Advaitins prior to Nīscaldās, who was

merely clarifying their arguments, sorting through seemingly conflicting views, and determining the most effective and relevant standpoints. And, c) while Nīscaldās is certainly reported to have lived a life that demonstrated his identity with Brahman, attaining such identity, according to Vedānta, requires that the seeker not simply emulate a living teacher but engage in *śravaṇa*, listening to canonical texts expounded by a teacher, *manana*, reflection, on the content of these texts, and *nididhyāsana*, profound and continuous meditation on the same.

From a review of Dādū's teachings, as recorded in the *Dādū Vāṇī* and presented in chapter 3, it becomes clear that Dādū was intimately familiar with the teachings of Islam and that he did not consider Muslims as "others." For Dādū, a true Muslim is one who is honest, patient, compassionate, and considerate to all (*DV* 13.26-28). Moreover, Dādū suggests that categorizing humans as Hindus and Muslims is contrived and irrelevant from the standpoint of the highest, the non-dual. Dādū is critical of all religious groups, not just Hindus and Muslims; he considers himself to be beyond such trivial labels. He is equally critical of both Hindu and Muslim practices and does not value the study of scripture, which he considers to be empty of praxis. Brahman without attributes (*nirguṇa*) is beyond words. Dādū is also critical of *jāti*, caste, considering it a *bhrama*, an erroneous notion. From the standpoint of the absolute, *pūrṇa brahma*, there is only one *ātmā*; to think in terms of *jāti* and *varṇa*, caste and class, is indicative of not seeing the true nature of reality, of "beating the snake" even though it is not really there. Rather than considering a person in terms of his caste based on birth and lineage, Dādū believes that one's deeds and what is within oneself are the things that matter. These views are also echoed in the works of Dādū's immediate disciples, Rajjab and Sundardās, although hints of the "brahmanization" of the Dādū Panth are already visible in Sundardās's writings. Dādū and his followers advocate the transcendence of categories such as Hindu and Muslim, high caste and low. They were not the first, since Kabir (1398-1448) and Nānak (1469-1539) had preached this radical message prior to Dādū, and Dādū was familiar with their works. This is altogether logical and unsurprising: for a *nirguṇī sant*, a devotee of the unqualified, attribute-less God, any duality is evidence of mistaken attachment to the unreal, and any attachment to attributes and forms is tantamount to forsaking the divine. Growing up within and maintaining a lifelong affiliation with the Dādū Panth, Nīscaldās must have internalized this message, which would have a significant bearing, on both his preference for Advaita Vedānta and on his decision to write in the vernacular.

10.3 Motives for Writing in the Vernacular

We saw that in general there is an average time lag of four or five centuries between the start of literary vernacularization and the appearance of independent Advaita texts (Table 2, p. 85) due to the fact that the vast body of Sanskrit philosophical literature that continued to be generated through the eighteenth and even nineteenth centuries took longer to assimilate and structure. However, an independent work such as Niścaldās's *VP* reflects the historicist periodization seen in Sanskrit works on Nyāya and Advaita, and, in reorganizing vast swaths of Advaita thought, it brings out a freshness and relevancy of the subject that was in danger of being suffocated by the centuries of commentarial argumentation and counter-refutation carried out in Sanskrit.

Sheldon Pollock describes vernacularization as a deliberate choice to create texts, which are modeled on those of a “superordinate literary culture” and a cosmopolitan language such as Sanskrit, in languages that “do not travel,” electing instead to “remain within a limited world.” Such a choice is influenced by cultural and political factors and potentially by nationalizing and colonizing forces as well. In the case of Swāmī Niścaldās, there are two superordinate literary cultures influencing his works: the Sanskrit philosophical tradition with its vast body of literature spanning millennia, and the Dādūpanthī culture with its tradition of writing in vernacular Hindi since the sixteenth century. In contrast to Pollock's characterization, rather than choosing to remain in a “limited world,” Niścaldās chose to write in the vernacular for exactly the opposite purpose: to make his works more widely accessible than they would have been if they had been written in Sanskrit. Instead of “not traveling,” his *VS* is widely available and almost pan-Indian with translations available in most of the major national languages including Sanskrit.

Given what we have learned about Rājā Rāmsiṃha and Niścaldās in chapters 2 and 3, Niścaldās seems to completely ignore colonial and nationalist matters. But, in choosing to compose his works in the vernacular, he clearly engages with issues of culture and power, possibly motivated by his patron, the ruler of Būndī, and also by his own experience of discrimination and hardships imposed by his *jāti* in his attempts to acquire a Sanskrit education. Niścaldās's decision to write in the vernacular may also have been influenced by Rāmsiṃha's patronage and desire to have the works commissioned by him be in the vernacular, as had been the case for the *Vaṃśa Bhāskar* about his Cauhān lineage written by the poet Sūryamalla Miśraṇ. But nonetheless, Niścaldās's writings clearly reflect a deliberate decision to write in the vernacular in order to make the knowledge of liberation available to all, irrespective of caste. His

decision to write in Hindi may have also been influenced by the then prevalent “winds of vernacularization” and “new intellectualism” and historicist perspectives that began to arise in literary works as early as the sixteenth century. In the sphere of philosophical literature, vernacularization occurred after as much as four to five centuries, partly due to the challenge of assimilating the colossal body of preceding knowledge in the field. But, as the next sections show, there is a deeper source to be found for Nīścaldās’s motive to write in the vernacular.

10.3.1 Vedānta and Caste

As an agent of this process of vernacularization, Nīścaldās is well aware of the “internal criticism,” of heredity-based caste hierarchy within the earlier literature, such as the *MBh* from almost two millennia prior, which he cites in support of the eligibility of everyone, irrespective of caste, to attain the knowledge of liberation. He is particularly selective in citing Śaṅkara as also supporting this position, but, as became evident in section 4.4 above, Śaṅkara’s position on the eligibility of śūdras is more nuanced and politic. I have argued that, from an ultimate (*pāramārthika*) standpoint, Śaṅkara subscribes to the same position as Nīścaldās and many others in the Advaita and *nirguṇī sant* traditions.

In the *VP* (8.108, 411), Nīścaldās refutes the *Manu-smṛti* injunction (4.80a) against teaching śūdras, “*na śūdrāya matiṃ dadyāt*,” and in support, loosely and selectively paraphrases Śaṅkara’s commentary to *BS* 1.3.34-38, which is typically titled “The ineligibility of the śūdra (*apaśūdrādhikaraṇam*).” On closer scrutiny of the commentary, Śaṅkara clearly states that the śūdra is ineligible for studying the Vedas (and thus, Vedānta as well), giving only a passing concession to the fact that knowledge of liberation through the study of *itihāsa* and *purāṇa* cannot be withheld from śūdras because knowledge of Brahman can arise as a result of [positive] tendencies (*saṃskāra*) developed in their past lives. To reconcile the contradiction between Śaṅkara’s hardline stance against śūdras and his concessive statement permitting śūdras eligibility to gain Brahman-knowledge only through study of *itihāsa* and *purāṇas*, we surveyed the broader corpus of Śaṅkara’s works. It has been argued by scholars that, in his commentaries on the *prasthāna-trayī*, the *BS*, *BhG* and Upaniṣads, Śaṅkara was addressing the brahman orthodoxy and hence was rather conservative in order to win them over. In light of this, his vehemence against śūdras would be in keeping with the times, and it is altogether more

remarkable that Śaṅkara saw fit to include mention of *any* possibility of śūdras attaining liberation.

To get a better sense of Śaṅkara's true position, we looked at his independent works, particularly the short *stotra* (hymn), *Manīṣā-pañcakam* (MP) "Five verses of Wisdom," about an encounter between Śaṅkara and a *cāṇḍāla*, outcaste (section 4.4). Judging this work to be genuinely attributed to Śaṅkara on the basis of a wide survey of scholarly opinions, we saw that Śaṅkara advocates transcending caste altogether. We also get glimpses of this view in his commentaries to *BU* and *TU* and hence can conclude that Nīscaldās was being true to Śaṅkara's broader intent and was not trying to misrepresent Śaṅkara's stance to further his own views. In support of their argument that śūdras are eligible for liberation, Nīscaldās and Śaṅkara both cited *Mahābhārata Śānti-parvan* 12.314.45c: "*śrāvayec caturo varṇān*, all four *varṇas* ought to be taught." When the *MBh* was examined (section 4.5), we found that it too contains many statements that śūdras are eligible for the study of Brahman. In *MBh* 13.131, a dialog between Umā and Śiva, Śiva states that *anyone* with pure deeds, good conduct and virtue, *even a śūdra*, is to be considered a twice-born, not just those belonging to the brahman, kṣatriya or vaiśya castes. In fact, a brahman is not determined by birth but by conduct. The verse cited by Śaṅkara and Nīscaldās occurs in a dialog where Vyāsa, the author of the *MBh*, blesses his five students, including his own son, Śuka. There, Vyāsa says that *anyone* "who is desirous of learning the Vedas (*brahma śuśrūṣave bhavet*)" is eligible to study the Vedas (12.314.40b). While Śaṅkara and Nīscaldās cite "*śrāvayec caturo varṇān*" to validate śūdras' eligibility to gain knowledge of Brahman through study of the *itihāsa* and *purāṇas*, Vyāsa is actually referring to teaching the Vedas (including the *Mahābhārata*) to all four castes. There is no mention of the restrictive narrowing of the materials suitable for study by women and śūdras to just the *itihāsa* and *purāṇas*.

Thus, criticism of the heredity-based caste hierarchy goes all the way back to the time of the composition of the *MBh*. This is also evident in the *BhG* portion of the *MBh*, for example, *BhG* 4.13ab and 18.41, where Kṛṣṇa states that the four *varṇas* were created by him in accordance with the distribution of karma and the *guṇas*. Moreover, in *BhG* 9.32, Kṛṣṇa himself allows that even women and śūdras can attain "the highest goal." Nīscaldās himself mentions the argument of Amalānanda (fourteenth c.), the author of the *Kalpataru* commentary on the *Bhāmatī*, that

even *śruti* speaks of non-brahmans such as Raikva (in *CU* 4.1-2) and women such as Gārgī Vācakanvī (*BU* 3.6, 3.8) as possessing the knowledge of Brahman (*VP* 8.97, 406; section 8.4, p. 301). Back in the sixteenth century, Appayya Dīkṣita, in his *SLS*, suggested that śūdras are only excluded from the study of *saguṇa* Brahman; everyone is eligible for the study *nirguṇa* Brahman. It is quite likely that Nīścaldās was familiar with the *SLS* (see section 10.10.1 below). Appayya, however, falls short of giving śūdras complete access to liberation; through the study of the *itihāsa* and *purāṇas* and the performance of good works, the śūdra will gain rebirth in a higher caste and then access liberation.⁶¹² Thus, Nīścaldās is not saying anything new vis-à-vis caste; he is simply yet again bringing to the foreground viewpoints that have been in the cultural consciousness for a long time but have been repeatedly disregarded for the sake of keeping the status quo favorable to the twice-born castes. Advaita Vedānta, with its ultimate (*pāramārthika*) standpoint of absolute non-duality, and also the *nirguṇī sant* traditions of Kabir, Dādū, and others have continually spoken out against hereditary caste stratification.⁶¹³ Nīścaldās is just one more voice in a chorus that extends through the millennia but this time in the vernacular. Whereas the *nirguṇī sant* traditions completely rejected the Vedic corpus, Nīścaldās makes his case from within the Vedānta tradition, drawing on *śruti*, *smṛti*, and a vast lineage of illustrious teachers of Advaita.

10.3.2 Nīścaldās's Position on Caste

Nīścaldās simply makes the point, in a clear and uncompromising fashion, that all humans have the right to knowledge of the highest truth, of liberation. Nīścaldās then actively embodies this point by writing in the vernacular. This can be viewed as a deliberately subversive act, essentially giving even the śūdras and those outside the caste system access to Upaniṣadic, i.e., Vedic knowledge of liberation that the Hindu orthodoxy traditionally limits only to listening to the *itihāsa* and *purāṇa* texts.⁶¹⁴ By presenting the teachings of Vedānta in the vernacular, Nīścaldās is not just giving access to the śūdras and those outside the caste system; he is giving them a chance to read and study these texts on their own. Nīścaldās's subversion is however

⁶¹² See n. 236, p. 87.

⁶¹³ One might even speculate that Appayya Dīkṣita's acceptance of the eligibility of śūdras to study *nirguṇa* Brahman, in his sixteenth c. work, *SLS*, may have been somehow influenced by the *nirguṇī sants* such as Kabir, who preceded Appayya by a century.

⁶¹⁴ Even the higher castes, who were perhaps losing their knowledge of Sanskrit by this time, benefited from Nīścaldās's vernacular works, as was attested by Pt. Pītāmbār (1917, 7) on p. 78.

restricted only to the Hindu sphere; the Dādūpanthī trend towards Hinduization and the tacit exclusion of any mention of Muslims that began in the time of Sundardās is well-entrenched by Nīścaldās's time to the extent that there is *no mention* of Muslims at all in his works.

Nonetheless, Nīścaldās considered Sanskrit unsuitable for dispelling any doubts an average person might have regarding Vedānta (*VS* vv. 1.7-8).⁶¹⁵ Therefore, without engaging in any doctrinal polemics, he composed *VS* in simple vernacular Hindi to avoid burdening the reader with technical Sanskrit vocabulary. The more erudite *VP* was taken on, possibly at the instigation of Rāmsiṃha, to dispel any doubts that may have remained for the readers of *VS*. Nīścaldās's own experience of caste discrimination encountered while on the quest for knowledge in his youth, coupled with his exposure to the non-sectarian, caste-disregarding teachings of Dādū Dayāl and his disciples, was surely a factor. Nīścaldās, from his Advaita perspective, claimed that the Vedānta teachings of one who knows oneself as Brahman will remove all doubts and confusion, in *any* language, not just Sanskrit (*VS* vv. 3.10; *VS* 2.66, 36; *VS* 3.99, 59-60).⁶¹⁶ A measure of the success of the *VP* may be gained from Pt. Pītāmbhar who relates that several Sanskrit-knowing pandits read the text in hiding because they were embarrassed to have to seek help from a vernacular text (Pītāmbhar 1917, 7). Yet, despite intentionally breaking with the Sanskrit tradition, when Nīścaldās narrates the parable (in *VS*) of King Agr̥dhadeva becoming enlightened through the teachings of a guru he had seen in a dream, the guru instructs the king in Sanskrit! Apparently the pro-Sanskrit tendencies in the nineteenth century were still rooted deeply enough in Nīścaldās that, even in a Vedānta text deliberately written in the vernacular, the dream-guru of a parable narrated in the vernacular *must* still impart teaching of liberation in Sanskrit rather than in the vernacular.

10.4 Influence of Nīścaldās's Works

It is quite clear that his works have had great influence and popularity as a result of their use of the vernacular. *VS* has been translated into modern Hindi, Sanskrit, Bengali, Marathi, Gujarati, Tamil, Telugu and English, and possibly Urdu and Gurmukhi. The *VP* and *VS* have also inspired considerable secondary literature. For *VS*, we have Pandit Pītāmbhar's *ṭippaṇī* (gloss), written in 1917, and also his abridgment of the *VP*, called *Vṛttiratnāvalī*, published in the same volume. In similar vein are the *Vedānta-pradīpikā* by Lakṣānanda, an abridgement of *VS* (Siṃha 1981, 92),

⁶¹⁵ Discussed in section 4.1, p. 70.

⁶¹⁶ See section 4.1, pp. 70-77.

a Marathi commentary by ‘Sākhare’ Kisan Mahārāj (Kapil 2005, 247), as well as the translations into numerous languages. *VS* in Hindi has been available in various versions since at least 1917, if not earlier (Kapil 2005, 245). A Khemrāj Śrīkrṣṇadās (KS) edition has been available since at least 1906, and is regularly studied by Advaita Vedāntin monks in Benares, Rishikesh and Haridwar. The Vārkarī sect of Maharashtra, which worships Viṭhobā as a form of Kṛṣṇa, employs the *VS* as one of its primary training texts in its educational institutions. The *VP* too has been in print continuously since 1899, published virtually unchanged by Khemrāj Śrīkrṣṇadās and the Venkateśvar Steam Press in Mumbai. It is the only version readily available, in a form that is has been virtually unchanged for over a century despite its many typographical errors and other incongruities. Ātmānand Muni undertook a painstaking edit of the text in 1969 without the benefit of any handwritten manuscripts, but this edition, though vastly superior, has been out of print for nearly 40 years.

10.5 The *VP*, Illuminator of *Vṛttis*

The argument has been made that Nīścaldās's deliberate choice to compose his works in the vernacular was a direct outcome of his being firmly rooted in his understanding of Advaita Vedānta. The best way to fully understand his position is to look closely at his *magnum opus* on Vedānta, the *VP*. This was undertaken in chapters 5 through 9, and here in the conclusion, a highly abridged version is provided in order to make Nīścaldās's emphasis on Brahman-realization more evident. Nīścaldās is, for the most part, not saying anything new as compared to the traditional Advaita perspective. His brilliance lies in reorganizing vast swaths of over a millennium of post-Śaṅkara Advaita thought by using the concept of a *vṛtti* as a central element around which the precepts of Advaita can be presented. Although the concept of *vṛtti* is implicit in all of Advaita literature, it is never typically treated at length. By adopting this new structure, Nīścaldās brings a clarity, freshness, and relevancy to the subject that was in danger of being suffocated by the centuries of commentarial argumentation and counter-refutation carried out in Sanskrit.

At the very outset of the *VP*, Nīścaldās states: “Ignorance and its results are removed and the highest happiness, *ānanda*, is attained by means of the *vṛtti*, ‘I am Brahman;’ this is the ultimate purpose (*siddhānta*) of Vedānta. In this connection, there arises the desire to know 1) what is a *vṛtti*, 2) what is the cause of a *vṛtti*, and 3) what is its purpose? For that, this text *Vṛttiprabhākar*,

The Illuminator of *Vṛttis*, has been written.” A *vṛtti* is defined as “the modification of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* and ignorance (*ajñāna*).” One’s consciousness cognizes an object only when a *vṛtti* “goes out” through one’s senses and assumes the form of the object of perception. Nīscaldās, in answering these three questions, uses the concept of *vṛtti* as the central theme through which to explore Vedānta epistemology, metaphysics and praxis. While one is not aware of one’s identity with Brahman, one relates to the objective world about us by means of various *vṛttis*, and in effect creates one’s “reality” by means of these *vṛttis*. And, by means of the practices of listening (*śravaṇa*) to Vedānta texts and reflection (*manana*) and profound and continuous meditation (*nididhyāsana*) on their content, the seeker’s *vṛtti* that takes the form of Brahman (*brahmākāra vṛtti*), establishes the knowledge of oneself as Brahman, and effects liberation. Nīscaldās’s goal is to lead the reader to an understanding of how to attain this knowledge of Brahman for oneself through the clarification of the process by means of which this occurs.

10.5.1 The Six Means of Cognition

A *vṛtti* leads to cognition, and it is necessary to distinguish between valid and invalid cognitions. To understand valid cognition, one must understand the six means (*pramāṇa*) that are accepted by Vedānta: 1) perception (*pratyakṣa*), 2) inference (*anumāna*), 3) verbal testimony (*śabda*), 4) analogy (*upamāna*), 5) postulation (*arthāpatti*) and 6) non-cognition (*anupalabdhi*). These means of valid cognition, the topic of the first six chapters of the *VP*, were summarized in chapter 5 of this dissertation.

In the discussion of perception, we learned that, for Vedānta, erroneous cognition is not sense-produced but is a modification of ignorance (*avidyā*); thus, the *antaḥ-karaṇa* is the locus as well as the material cause of the ignorance. Depending on whether the mind is considered a sense-organ or not, there are five or six kinds of sense-generated direct perception. Except through verbal testimony (*śabda*), which is treated as a separate means of cognition, sense perception cannot provide direct knowledge of Brahman.

In presenting inference, Nīscaldās maintains that there are two types: inference for oneself (*svārtha*), and inference for others (*parārtha*). The latter is useful for proving the identity of the individual (*jīva*) and Brahman; however, inference alone cannot be the cause for self-realization of Brahman because the doctrine states that, apart from the Vedānta utterances (*vākya*), no other

means of knowledge takes up Brahman as its object. Inference merely serves to bring one closer to the knowledge of Brahman.

Verbal testimony is the most important means of cognition for Advaita because it alone can bring about the realization of the identity of the *jīva* and Brahman. As a result, the different ways in which words bring about verbal cognition (*śabda pramāṇa*) is discussed in detail. Verbal cognition (*śābdī pramā*) can be either empirical (*vyāvahārika*) or absolute (*pāramārthika*), and Vedic statements teach either empirical meanings or the absolute reality, Brahman. All Vedānta statements are for the knowledge of Brahman alone, and are of two classes: 1) subsidiary statements (*avāntara-vākya*), which specifically explain either Brahman or the self; and 2) great sayings (*mahā-vākya*) such as “*tat tvam asi*, you are that” (*CU* 6.8.7), which explain the identity between the words “you” and “that.” The *mahā-vākyas* bring about the knowledge of Brahman through inclusive and exclusive implication (*bhāga-tyāga-lakṣaṇā*), which is also bare implication (*kevala-lakṣaṇā*), since there is a direct relation between the literal meaning and the implied meaning, namely, consciousness.

When there is a potential conflict between two means of cognition, such as perception (*pratyakṣa*) and verbal testimony (*śabda*), the cognitive apparatus for the object that is more greatly desired to be known (*utkaṭa-jijñāsita*) will win out. The desire to know worldly things (*laukika padārtha*) and the apparatus for their cognition is always possible in the waking state, and such worldly things will be cognized in the absence of a desire to know Brahman. To obstruct the apparatus of cognition of worldly things, such as perception et al., one needs to develop a stronger desire to know Brahman as compared to worldly objects. Nīscaldās holds that, rather than contemplation of the meaning of the Vedānta, it is the desire to know Brahman itself that is the cause of the knowledge of Brahman. Vedānta statements are not injunctions, as the Mīmāṃsakas maintain, but have the knowledge of non-dual Brahman as their intent (*tātparya*). For Vedānta, even the Vedas are not eternal, as everything other than consciousness (*cetana*) is not eternal (*anitya*). Vedānta considers the Vedas and the *Mahābhārata*, etc., to be humanly authored, but Īśvara, Vyāsa (the author of the *MBh*), and the other authors are considered to be omniscient. Īśvara reproduces the Vedas, i.e., *śruti*, faithfully from creation to creation, whereas Vyāsa and the other authors, according to their desire in each creation, create works that are considered *smṛti* and are not necessarily identical to those of the prior creation. The goal of these

created works is the knowledge of Brahman, which is reproduced faithfully and eternally, from creation to creation.

The traditional Vedānta definition of analogy (*upamāna*) is the cognition of similarity. Nīścaldās proposes a better definition of analogical cognition as that which arises from the cognition of either similarity or dissimilarity since, as there is nothing similar to Brahman, analogy would otherwise not be helpful to a seeker. Analogy (*upamāna*) thus becomes the cognition of the dissimilarity between the empirical world (*prapañca*) and Brahman, and its result is the analogical cognition (*upamiti*) that Brahman is dissimilar from the creation.

Postulation (*arthāpatti*) is accepted only by Vedānta and Mīmāṃsā. The postulation of an explanation (*upapādaka*) by the cognition of the lack of proof of that which is to be explained (*upapādyā*) is called the postulation cognition (*pramā*), and its cause, the lack of proof of that which is to be explained, is called the postulation means (*pramāṇa*). Postulation can arise either from what is seen (*dr̥ṣṭārthāpatti*) or from what is heard (*śrūtārthāpatti*). An example of postulation from the heard is the case of a seeker understanding the meaning of Upaniṣadic statements such as “*tarati śokam ātmavit*, one who knows the *ātmā* transcends sorrow” (CU 7.1.3). On hearing of “the cessation of sorrow through knowledge”, that which is to be explained (*upapādyā*), one has to postulate, by means of an explanation (*upapādaka*), the implied “illusoriness of sorrow, *śoka-mithyātva*.” As an example of postulation from what is seen, after the mind is stilled during non-conceptual one-pointedness (*nirvikalpa samādhi*), only non-dual Brahman remains, and all experience of non-*ātmā* objects is absent. This absence is possible only if the non-*ātmā* objects are mental constructs that cease when the mind is stilled. Due to the perception of the lack of a proof of the absence of all duality upon the stilling of the mind, the conception arises that all duality is merely a mental construct. Here, the means of postulation is the cognition of what is to be explained (*upapādyā*), specifically, that all duality ceases on the stilling of the mind. The postulation cognition is the cognition of the explanation (*upapādaka*) that all duality is a mental construct.

Non-cognition (*anupalabdhi*) is only accepted by the Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsakas and the Vedāntins as a distinct means of cognizing non-existence (*abhāva*), which is not considered to be perceptible by the senses. Only the non-existence of those objects whose existence is ordinarily perceptible by the other positive means of cognition is cognizable. The scriptures speak of the non-existence of the empirical world (*prapañca*) in the past, present and future times as in

“There is no diversity here at all, *neha nānāsti kiñcana*” (BU 4.4.19). Non-cognition is useful to a seeker of liberation (*jijñāsu*) as a means of ascertaining the non-existence of the empirical world from the absolute (*pāramārthika*) standpoint. The nature of the empirical world is cognized, and, if it were absolute in nature, that would also be cognized. But it is not thus cognized; hence, the non-existence of the empirical world is absolute. Non-cognition aids a seeker in arriving at both the absence of diversity in the empirical world and the absolute difference of the empirical world from Brahman.

In this brief review of the six means of cognition, much of the detailed analysis presented earlier has been omitted in order to draw attention to the fact that Nīścaldās never loses sight of his main objective and the ultimate purpose (*siddhānta*) of Vedānta, namely, the knowledge that one is Brahman. He started the *VP* by telling us that a *vṛtti* is the means for gaining this knowledge, and, therefore, he is going to tell us about *vṛttis* by answering the three questions he introduced. To explain how a *vṛtti* leads to cognition, he takes up the different means of cognition at great length, but, at the conclusion of the presentation of each means, he discusses its direct or indirect utility in effecting the knowledge of Brahman. It is as if Nīścaldās is aware that readers may lose sight of the goal as they try to keep up with the philosophical argumentation, as a result he reiterates that philosophical debate serves only to clarify one’s understanding of the means. This principal focus on soteriology will continue to be a noticeable pattern in the remainder of Nīścaldās’s *VP*.

10.5.2 The Cause and Types of *Vṛttis*

Once the means of valid cognition have been described, Nīścaldās turns to the second question pertaining to *vṛttis*, namely, what is their cause. For Advaita, there are only two types of causes, material and efficient (*upādāna* and *nimitta kāraṇa*), which can also be divided into the special cause (*asādhāraṇa kāraṇa*) and the common cause (*sādhāraṇa kāraṇa*). For a *vṛtti* that is a cognition, the material cause is the *antaḥ-kāraṇa*, and the efficient causes are the means of cognition (*pramāṇa*) as well as the functioning (*vyāpāra*) of the contact between the sense organs and the objects, etc. For the *vṛtti* that is Īśvara’s knowledge, *māyā* is the material cause, and the efficient cause is the unseen potency (*adr̥ṣṭa*) [of the collective *jīvas*]. For an error-producing *vṛtti*, ignorance (*avidyā*) is the material cause, and defect is the efficient cause. Nīścaldās puts forth a more robust definition of a *vṛtti* as a modification of the *antaḥ-kāraṇa* and

ignorance, which is the cause for practical usage (*asti-vyavahāra kā hetu*). Consciousness delimited by an uncontradicted *vr̥tti* (*abādhita-vr̥tavyavacchinna-cetana*) is termed a valid cognition (*pramā-jñāna*), whereas consciousness delimited by a contradicted *vr̥tti* is an indirect cognition. The *antaḥ-karaṇa*'s *vr̥tti* in the form of memory or recollection (*smṛti*) is treated separately from direct and indirect cognitions.

A detailed classification of the various kinds of *vr̥ttis* is presented next (chapter 5, Figure 9, p. 154) for the sake of understanding which *vr̥ttis* are worth cultivating for the purpose of attaining liberation, namely, knowledge of the identity of the self with Brahman (though Nīścaldās does not directly state this). The implicit message is that cognitions not pertaining to the self (*anātmagocara*) are unproductive. False (*ayathārtha*) cognitions pertaining to uncertainty, regarding the means of cognition or the self, can be resolved through the study and contemplation (*śravaṇa-manana*) of the four chapter of *BS*. Definite false cognitions that can be contradicted (*bādhita*) by knowledge of something other than Brahman fall in either the empirical or illusory sphere and can be thus resolved by a proper understanding of the nature of superimposition and erroneous cognition. False cognitions that are empirically uncontradicted, namely, ignorance [of Brahman], cognition of the five elements (*mahābhūta*) and of the elemental apparent world (*prapañca*), can be resolved only through the knowledge of Brahman.

10.5.3 Superimposition and Theories of Error

Thus, to understand and resolve false cognitions, in chapter 6, we looked at Nīścaldās's treatment of superimposition (*adhyāsa*). Superimposition is defined as either “the appearance (*avabhāsa*) in the substratum (*adhiṣṭhāna*), which possesses a different reality (*sattā*) from that of the substratum,” or “the manifestation of an object in the locus of its absence.” Various classifications of superimposition were presented. The definition of superimposition does not extend to mediate erroneous cognitions (*parokṣa bhrama*) because the term “appearance (*avabhāsa*)” applies only to immediate cognition. Advaita is primarily concerned with addressing the immediate, non-objective (*anartha*), erroneous cognitions such as agency, etc. Understanding how these occur through superimposition leads to their removal and the knowledge of the nature of one's self. Nīścaldās presents a defense of superimposition against various objections and explains that, according to Vedānta, all substances are imagined and their absence is absolute and hence Brahman. An entity is said to have *anirvacanīya* status if it is

“other than real or unreal (*sad-asad-vilakṣaṇa*).” That which is “real (*sat*)” cannot be negated in the past, present and future; anything “other than real (*sad-vilakṣaṇa*),” however, is that which is negated. “Unreal (*asat*)” means that which has no form, such as the “hare of a horn,” or “son of a barren woman;” “other than unreal (*asad-vilakṣaṇa*)” is that which has form. Thus, “other than real or unreal” is that which has a form and can be negated.

This leads us to the Advaita theory of error, *anirvacanīya-khyāti*. When an empirically real rope is erroneously cognized as an *anirvacanīya* snake, the general attribute (“this-ness”) of the substratum, the rope, is validly cognized by the cognizer-consciousness that goes out to the rope in the form of a *vṛtti* and becomes identical with the rope-delimited consciousness. Subsequently, the erroneous cognition of the snake arises due to ignorance of the particulars (*viśeṣa*) of the rope. Various views of the cause of this superimposition of a snake on a rope are considered, including those of one Kavītārka Cakravartī Nṛsiṃha Bhaṭṭopādhyāya (KCNB), of a *dharmijñāna-vādī* (DJV), i.e., one who accepts substantive cognition, of Sarvajñātman’s *Samkṣepa-śārīraka*, and of Prakāśātman’s *Pañcapādikā-vivaraṇa*. An erroneous cognition is deemed to be of the form of a *vṛtti* of ignorance (*avidyā*) in the shape of the superimposed object; that is to say, an *anirvacanīya* relation of the superimposition object to the “this-ness” of the substratum arises in the erroneous cognition. However, Nīścaldās states that although the correctness of this view is in accordance with the ancient authors (*prācīna-granthakār*), other views have similar merits and demerits. If any of these views effectively establishes the unreality of the empirical world and the knowledge of non-duality, the goal of Advaita is satisfied.

After the soundness of the Advaita theory is established and defended against objections, Nīścaldās presents five non-Advaita theories from the standpoint of their respective proponents and then shows each to be lacking, from the Advaita perspective: 1) *sat-khyāti-vāda*, the theory that the object of erroneous cognition is real; 2) *asat-khyāti-vāda*, the theory that the object of erroneous cognition is unreal, as subscribed to by the Mādhyamika Buddhists and some followers of Tantra; 3) *ātma-khyāti-vāda*, the Yogācāra Buddhist theory that the object of erroneous cognition is a mental state projected by the self; 4) *anyathā-khyāti-vāda*, the Nyāya theory that the object of erroneous cognition is real, but is present elsewhere; and 5) *akhyāti-vāda*, the Prābhākara Mīmāṃsaka theory that the erroneous cognition is the failure to distinguish between the real recollection and real substratum. Of these five, Nīścaldās spends the most time refuting *anyathā-khyāti* and, in the process, refutes the Nyāya perspective on the cause of

extraordinary (*alaukika*) perceptual cognition. He also presents and refutes the Naiyāyika arguments against the Advaita *anirvacanīya-khyāti* and gives quite a detailed treatment of the Prābhākara *akhyāti*.

In the process of refuting *ātma-khyāti*, Nīscaldās restates the Advaita position: consciousness is only one (*ekamātra*) and real; apart from it, the entire creation (*prapañca*) is false. *Anirvacanīya* is the same as illusory (*mithyā*), and this property is well known in objects other than consciousness. Any object other than *ātmā* is not real; in fact, the entire creation is of the nature of “barely seen then gone (*dr̥ṣṭa-naṣṭa*),” just like an imaginary city in the sky (*gandharva-nagara*). There is no difference at all between objects observed in a dream or during the waking state. Even so, the silver in mother-of-pearl is illusory, and that in a mineshaft, etc., is empirically real. This difference between non-*ātmā* objects as real and illusory is merely for the sake of facilitating a seeker’s entry into the knowledge of Advaita. Non-*ātmā* objects are said to have a two-fold reality, empirical and illusory, while consciousness has ultimate reality. When the lesser reality of the created world (*prapañca*) relative to consciousness has been established in one’s intellect, through the example of the dream and through the negative sentences of Vedānta, then one learns that all non-*ātmā* objects are illusory and bereft of both reality and manifestation (*sattā-sphūr̥ti-śūnya*). The elucidation of non-duality (*advaita*) by any other means is not possible.

10.5.4 Validity (*Pramāṭva*)

A potential objection is raised during the discussion of *akhyāti*: since one engages in activity dependent upon the ascertainment of validity, accepting erroneous cognition leads to the impossibility of definite activity (*pravṛtti*) as a result of doubts regarding the validity of the cognition. To show that this is not applicable to *anirvacanīya-khyāti*, Nīscaldās embarks on a discussion of the nature of validity (*pramāṭva*) and invalidity (*apramāṭva*), their arising, and the types of their cognitions. He presents and refutes the Nyāya theory of extrinsic validity (*parataḥ prāmāṇya*) as well as the differing views of Mīmāṃsā. The Advaita theory of intrinsic validity (*svataḥ-prāmāṇya*) is presented as the apprehension of validity by the means of apprehension of cognition which is free from defect. The witness-consciousness (*sākṣī*), accompanied by absence of defect, apprehends validity, whereas invalidity is cognized on experiencing unsuccessful activity and is not the object of the witness-consciousness. The production of invalidity occurs

via the cognition-producing means such as sense organs, inference, etc., accompanied by defect, which is external to the means. Thus, invalidity is produced extrinsically; when activity (*pravṛtti*) occurs after an erroneous cognition, and the result is not obtained, an inferential cognition of invalidity occurs. Conversely, in the instant of the production of cognition itself, the nature of the cognition and the validity residing in the cognition are illumined by the witness-consciousness. Under erroneous cognition, Nīścaldās includes cognition through contra-factual argument (*tarka-jñāna*) along with erroneous certainty (*bhrama-niścaya*), which is the certainty of that which is *anirvacanīya*, and finally, doubt. In the case of a given cognition, the certainty of its validity alone opposes doubt regarding its validity, and it is known by experience that neither certainty of error nor doubt regarding error occurs in that cognition. Doubt regarding validity is of the form, “Is this cognition valid or not?” Similarly, doubt regarding error takes the form, “Is this cognition erroneous or not?” These doubts are identical, as they are concerned with validity and error, albeit in inverse ways. When there is certainty of validity, just as doubt regarding validity no longer persists, similarly doubt regarding error also does not persist. Therefore, in Advaita, even upon accepting erroneous cognition, definite activity is possible.

10.5.5 Ignorance

Having concluded in *VP* 7a detailed analysis of the types of *vṛttis* and their causes, including erroneous cognitions, Nīścaldās now takes up the final question, “What is the purpose of a *vṛtti*?” in *VP* 8. In chapter 7, we saw that, in brief, the primary purpose of a *vṛtti* is the cessation (*nivṛtti*) of ignorance (*ajñāna*). The cessation of ignorance located in the consciousness (*cetana*) delimited (*avacchinna*) by a pot, etc., is brought about by the *vṛtti* in the form of a pot, etc., in the form of non-*ātmā*; the cessation of ignorance located in the non-delimited consciousness is brought about by the impartite (*akhaṇḍa*) *vṛtti* in the form of Brahman. That being the case, Nīścaldās next embarks on an investigation of ignorance, its object, and its locus, and examines the views of Vācaspati Miśra and Prakāśātman. Nīścaldās considers the terms *ajñāna*, *avidyā*, *prakṛti*, *māyā*, *śakti* and *pradhāna* to be synonymous with ignorance. For Advaita, the entity that has the power (*śakti*) to conceal (*āvaraṇa*) and project (*vikṣepa*), which is beginning-less and positive (*bhāva-rūpa*), is named *ajñāna*, ignorance. It is called *avidyā* due to its being destroyed by knowledge (*vidyā*); it is called *prakṛti* and *pradhāna*, by being the material cause of the apparent creation (*prapañca*), *māyā* because of effecting difficulties (*durghaṭa*), and *śakti* due to

its absence of independence (*svatantratā*). Ignorance does not have non-negatable reality, but it is acknowledged to have a reality that is different from empty (*tuccha-rūpa*) unreality, and therefore it has been called *anirvacanīya*, other than real and unreal. For Advaita, ignorance is a positive object of apprehension that is to be negated (*nivartanīya*) by cognition.

10.5.6 The Relation between *Jīva* and *Īśvara*

Nīścaldās describes *Īśvara* as the reflection (*pratibimba*) of consciousness in primordial matter based in pure consciousness, *mūla prakṛti*. *Avidyā* is the portion of *mūla prakṛti* qualified by the concealing power (*āvaraṇa-śakti*). The innumerable *jīvas* are the innumerable reflections of consciousness residing in the innumerable portions of ignorance. The relation between *jīva* and *Īśvara* is described diversely. All views accept a three-fold consciousness: 1) *jīva*, 2) *Īśvara*, and 3) pure Brahman. Since *jīva* and *Īśvara* have both been considered reflections, what is attained by liberated *jīvas* is Brahman, and not *Īśvara*. Four theories regarding the relation of *jīva* and *Īśvara* are considered in considerable detail: 1) Vidyāraṇya's Theory of Appearance, *ābhāsa-vāda*; 2) Prakāśātman's *Vivaraṇa* Theory of Reflection, *bimba-pratibimba-vāda*; 3) the Theory of Delimitation (*avaccheda-vāda*); and 4) the theory of there being only one *jīva* (*eka-jīva-vāda*, *dr̥ṣṭi-sr̥ṣṭi-vāda*). Of these four, Nīścaldās gives the least attention to the theory of delimitation (*avaccheda-vāda*) of the Bhāmātī tradition. The theory that there is only one *jīva* (Prakāśānanda's *eka-jīva-vāda*) will be summarized in section 10.9.

10.5.7 Primordial and Secondary Ignorance (*Mūlājñāna* and *Tūlājñāna*)

In chapter 8, Nīścaldās undertakes a more detailed examination of ignorance. In both the Theory of Appearance and the Theory of Reflection, ignorance is considered to be the transforming material cause (*pariṇāmī upādāna*) of the *anirvacanīya* entities. The common cause (*sādhāraṇa kāraṇa*) of the world (*jagat*) is primordial ignorance (*mūlājñāna*), the ignorance that conceals the nature of Brahman. Secondary ignorance (*tūlājñāna* or *avasthā-ajñāna*) is the ignorance that conceals consciousness delimited by an *upādhi*. Reflections in the mirror are known to be false (*mithyā*) even without the knowledge of Brahman, so they must be illusory, but the persistence of the reflection past the removal of ignorance suggests that the reflection ought to be considered empirical. To resolve this paradox, Nīścaldās revises the distinction between the empirical and the illusory: "That which is not produced by defects other than ignorance but is only produced by ignorance is empirical; that which is also produced by defects

other than ignorance is called illusory.” The reflection in the mirror is a transformation of primordial ignorance located in Brahman-consciousness; its substratum remains Brahman-consciousness alone. The reflection-superimpositions are not caused by defects other than ignorance; hence they can only be empirical. Primordial ignorance alone should be considered the material cause of either kind of superimposition, whether by the Theory of Appearance or by the Theory of Reflection. Also, the portion of ignorance with the power to project no longer remains after the cessation of the portion of ignorance in the form of its concealing power. The total cessation of ignorance occurs only by the cognition of the substratum devoid of obstructions. But as long as there remains the obstruction of *prārabdha karmas*, the cessation of the portion of ignorance that is the cause of projection does not occur even when the substratum is cognized as Brahman. Only a cognition having the same object is the opposer of ignorance; a cognition with different objects is not. Therefore, the cognition of the face, mirror, etc., opposes only the secondary ignorance situated in the consciousness delimited by the face, mirror, etc., and does not oppose primordial ignorance veiling Brahman.

The cessation of reflection-superimposition is possible by means of the cognition of the face, mirror, etc., without requiring the cognition of the substratum and also without the cessation of primordial ignorance. The substratum-cognition, by being a dispensable antecedent (*anyathā-siddha*), is not a cause in the cessation of superimposition. When the cessation of superimposition is spoken of by means of substratum-cognition, it is to be understood that only the cessation of ignorance is brought about by the substratum-cognition, and then, the cessation of superimposition occurs by the destruction of ignorance as its material cause. Reflection-superimposition, similar to space and the rest of creation (*prapañca*), is caused by primordial ignorance. But because the reflection-superimposition can be negated by an opposing cognition, even without cognition of the substratum, it is considered to be illusory.

10.5.8 The Cause of Dreams

Just as primordial and secondary ignorances are considered material cause for reflection-superimposition in the waking state, secondary ignorance is considered to be the material cause of dreams. Sleep is a particular state of ignorance, with the power to conceal and project. When primordial ignorance itself, qualified by adventitious (*āgantuka*) form, conceals consciousness delimited by the *upādhi*, then it is considered to be secondary ignorance (*avasthā-ajñāna* or

tūlājñāna). The efficient cause of the arising of secondary ignorance is the cessation (*uparāma*) of the actions that are the cause of experience (*bhoga*) in the waking state. Because secondary ignorance is a particular form of primordial ignorance, primordial ignorance alone is its material cause. The substratum of the illusory seer is the empirical seer, and the substratum of the illusory vision is the empirical vision. Upon waking, the cognition of the empirical seer-seen itself is the cognition of the substratum of the dream, which brings about the cessation of the material cause in the form of secondary ignorance from which the cessation of the illusory seer-seen takes place. But the empirical seer is also inert like the seen due to its being non-*ātmā*. Therefore, consciousness alone is the substratum of the dream state, specifically, consciousness non-delimited by ego and located inside the body, i.e., *jīva*-consciousness in the form of a reflection in ignorance. Consciousness is related to the cognizer (*pramātā*); therefore, just as happiness, etc., are immediately cognized without the functioning of the senses, it is similarly possible for the dream-superimposition to be immediately cognized without the functioning of the senses. The *jīva*-consciousness in the form of a reflection in ignorance, when delimited by ego, i.e., in the waking state, is the object of the *vr̥tti* in the form of “I” (*aham-ākāra vr̥tti*). When it is non-delimited by ego in the dream-state, the *jīva*-consciousness is not the object of the *aham-ākāra vr̥tti*; nevertheless, it is not concealed, and, being immediate itself, immediate superimposition is possible on the *jīva*-consciousness. The dream is illumined by *ātmā* without the functioning of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* and the senses, and its immediate cognition occurs by means of the self-immediate *ātmā*. In other words, dreams are illumined by self (*ātma-prakāśa*) or self-effulgent. In a dream, the elephants, etc., being seen by the eyes (*cākṣuṣatā*) that is perceived is also a superimposition, as are the elephants, etc.

10.5.9 *Dṛṣṭi-sṛṣṭi-vāda* (DSV), the Theory that Perception Precedes Creation

Self-effulgence need not be restricted to the dream state alone, and some thinkers extend this to all empirical states in accordance with the theory that perception precedes creation (*dṛṣṭi-sṛṣṭi-vāda*). Non-*ātmā* objects have no reality when uncognized (*ajñāta-sattā*); they all only have reality when cognized (*jñāta-sattā*). As long as the non-*ātmā* objects are revealed only by the witness (*sākṣī-bhāsyā*), their apprehension as objects of cognition produced by the senses is also superimposed. Nīścaldās mentions two types of *dṛṣṭi-sṛṣṭi-vāda*. 1) Perception (*dṛṣṭi*), as cognition (*jñāna-svarūpa*), is creation (*sṛṣṭi*); there is no creation separate from cognition.

2) Creation of the non-*ātmā* object takes place at the time of cognition of perception; prior to cognition, there is no non-*ātmā* object. Therefore, everything seen has reality when cognized (*jñāta-sattā*) alone, and not when uncognized (*ajñāta-sattā*). According to Nīscaldās, these two kinds of *dr̥ṣṭi-sr̥ṣṭi-vāda* are accepted (*abhimata*) by all Advaita *śāstras*. He is less understated in his *VS*, where he unequivocally states that *dr̥ṣṭi-sr̥ṣṭi-vāda* is the correct view (*siddhānta*) of Vedānta. The implications of this will be explored further in section 10.9.

10.5.10 Illusoriness (*Mithyātvā*)

Accepting the fact that all non-*ātmā* objects are unreal, the question arises regarding the property of being unreal (*mithyātvā*) that is possessed by unreal objects: is that property real or unreal? It cannot be real, because that would violate non-duality. If it is unreal, it will be unable to contradict the reality of the creation (*prapañca*), and once again the Advaita position would be harmed. In response, Nīscaldās provides the *Advaita-dīpikā* resolution that *mithyātvā* possesses an *anirvacanīya* empirical reality which is capable of contradicting the empirical reality of creation since the two are of the same level of reality. The *mithyātvā* of creation is ascertained by a valid means of cognition, such as *śruti*, etc., and thus it contradicts the reality of creation. However, if only one reality is accepted, in the manner of “Only reality as Brahman appears in the pot, etc., there is the absence of any further empirical or illusory difference in the reality of these objects.” In that case, the *Advaita-dīpikā* resolution is not possible, and so Nīscaldās presents his own solution: A property ascertained by a valid means of cognition can contradict an opposing property; but, where the other property is also ascertained by a valid means of cognition, there is no contradiction. Although reality is apprehended in creation by the perceptual means of cognition, human perception is weaker than *śruti* statements that do not originate with humans (*apauruṣeya*) and assert that the creation is unreal. Brahman’s being with manifestation (*saprapañcatva*) and being without manifestation (*niṣprapañcatva*) are both established by means of cognition; therefore, one property should not be negated by the other. But the highest human goal, i.e., liberation (*parama puruṣārtha*), is attained only by the cognition of being without manifestation; hence, the goal of *śruti* is the setting forth of being without manifestation. The description of Brahman’s being with manifestation is useful in the understanding of non-dual Brahman without manifestation; but, since it is not the goal of *śruti* to describe being with manifestation, being with manifestation is not ultimate but is only conceived. But it is not

illusory either; since it is produced by ignorance free from adventitious defects, it is empirical. Thus, being without manifestation negates being with manifestation. Brahman's being with manifestation is empirical and thus restricted, and it also is not eternal; it is present only in the time of ignorance prior to knowledge (*vidyā*) and is therefore negated by the property of being without manifestation. The converse is not possible. Nīścaldās proceeds to provide five different ways in which the reality of the visible world is negated by its illusoriness (*mithyātva*) as put forth in Vedānta texts such as the *Tattva-śuddhi*, the *Nyāya-sudhā*, the *Samkṣepa-śārīraka*, and the texts of two other unnamed authors.

10.5.11 Action (Karma) and Renunciation (*Sannyāsa*)

Having thus established the illusoriness of creation, Nīścaldās next takes up the means to dispel illusoriness, bluntly stating that there is no use for action in the cessation of an illusory (*mithyā*) entity, and consequently it is futile attempt to effect the cessation of *saṃsāra* by means of either action or action along with knowledge. Cessation can be brought about only by knowledge. Wherever the combination of knowledge and action is described in *śruti* and *smṛti* texts, the purport is specifically a sequential combination (*krama-samuccaya*) where a practitioner first performs action only and then later, having renounced all action, engages in listening to scripture (*śravaṇa*), etc., for the sake of knowledge. Action is to be done only as long as detachment (*vairāgya*) and the strong desire to know the inner essence (*pratyak tattva*) have not arisen through the purification of the *antaḥ-karaṇa*. But once detachment and strong desire to know have arisen, only renunciation is to be performed in the form of the giving up of action along with the means. Thus, although actions alone are the means of knowledge, in the time subsequent to the strong desire to know, only the sections (*aṅga*) of renunciation (*sannyāsa*), the *śama*, *dama*, etc., are to be performed and not actions. All good deeds, optional (*kāmya-karma*) as well as obligatory (*nitya-karma*), are useful in knowledge, since they cause the removal of the *pāpas* that are obstacles to knowledge.

With the arising of the desire for knowledge accompanied by strengthened dispassion (*vairāgya*), renunciation, in the form of the giving up of actions along with the means, is to be undertaken. The cessation of *pāpas* that are obstacles to knowledge is brought about even through renunciation. The obstacles to knowledge are multifarious; the cessation of some obstacles occurs through action, and the cessation of others, through renunciation alone.

Therefore, action and renunciation are both causes of knowledge since they effect the cessation of the knowledge-obstructing *pāpas* and are to be undertaken in sequence. Sometimes knowledge does not occur by means of *śravaṇa*, etc., that are performed only during the times of breaks (*chidra*) in day-to-day worldly action; renunciation is thus the cause of the practice (*abhyāsa*) of continual *śravaṇa*, etc. Nīścaldās considers differing opinions as to whether or not kṣatriyas, vaiśyas and sūdras are eligible for renunciation as well as *śravaṇa* and concludes that all humans are eligible for knowledge and devotion. Due to the impressions (*saṃskāra*) of prior births, even those of the lowest caste can develop a desire to know (*jijñāsā*) and then, by means of human words, can get knowledge of Brahman and become liberated by the cessation of ignorance and its effects. Only humans are capable of self-knowledge (*ātma-jñāna*). To effect self-realization, one must cultivate the Divine Properties (*daivī-sampadā*), the twenty-six positive traits enumerated in *BhG* 16.1-3. Nīścaldās states that the conclusion (*nirdhāra*) of all *śāstras* is that all humans are eligible for devotion to God and Brahman-realization.

10.5.12 The Cessation of Ignorance

The conclusion (*siddhānta*) of Advaita texts is that the cessation of ignorance and its effects is brought about by Brahman-realization (*tattva-jñāna*). Hence, Nīścaldās examines the form that is taken by the removal of ignorance and attainment of Brahman-realization. The *ṛtti* of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* in regard to the identity of *jīva* and Brahman is called Brahman-realization, and the *antaḥ-karaṇa* is an effect of ignorance; therefore, Brahman-realization in the form of the *antaḥ-karaṇa*'s *ṛtti* is also an effect of ignorance. The universal (*sāmānya*) rule that the cause and effect do not oppose one another is negated by the particular (*viśeṣa*) rule that the cognition and ignorance having the same object mutually oppose each other. The ignorance-caused *ṛtti*-cognition in the form of Brahman-realization brings about the destruction of ignorance along with its effects.

If ignorance is completely destroyed by Brahman-realization, then the body of the wise person, who becomes liberated while living (*jīvan-mukta*) through Brahman-realization, should cease to exist because the persistence of the body, or the effect, is not possible with the destruction of ignorance, or the material cause. However, even after Brahman-realization has occurred, the persistence of the wise person's body is observed until the fruition of the commenced (*prārabdha*) karma, and, therefore, some authors hold that a trace (*leśa*) of

ignorance still remains even upon Brahman-realization. Nīścaldās suggests that when the cessation of ignorance with its effects takes place, since there is no other object left suitable for cessation, the cessation of Brahman-realization also occurs without requiring any other means for its cessation. It occurs in a manner analogous to how, when burning charcoal is added to a grass heap, the grass heap is reduced to ashes, and the charcoal is also reduced to ashes along with the grass. According to Padmapāda, knowledge opposes only ignorance but not its effects. Thus, the cessation of ignorance alone occurs from Brahman-realization, and in the instant following the cessation of ignorance, its effect ceases by itself due to the absence of the material cause. However, as long as trace ignorance in the form of *prārabdha karma* remains, the body persists, but, when the *prārabdha karma* obstruction becomes absent, the body and the Brahman-realization both cease.

There are two means for Brahman-realization by which the cessation of ignorance takes place. According to all Advaita texts, 1) for the best aspirant (*uttama adhikārī*), *śravaṇa* and the rest alone are the means; and 2) for the middling aspirant (*madhyama adhikārī*), the contemplation of the self as attribute-less (*nirguṇa*) Brahman (*ahaṃ-graha upāsanā*) is a means of Brahman-realization. But several authors hold that for both alternatives, continued meditation (*prasaṅkhyāna*), a continuous stream of *vṛttis*, is the sole instrument for Brahman-realization. Just as the middling aspirant is required to perform contemplation of a continuous *vṛtti* in the form of attribute-less Brahman, and that in itself is considered *prasaṅkhyāna* for that aspirant, similarly, for the best aspirant too, after reflection (*manana*), *prasaṅkhyāna* in the form of *nididhyāsana* is the means for immediate cognition of Brahman. Because *prasaṅkhyāna* is not a means of cognition (*pramāṇa*), the knowledge of Brahman that it causes cannot possibly be a valid cognition (*pramā*). Nevertheless, like an erroneous cognition leading to the correct result (*saṃvādī bhrama*), and since the negation of objects does not take place without knowledge of Brahman, it is possible for the knowledge of Brahman caused by *prasaṅkhyāna* to be a *pramā*. Moreover, the source of continuous meditation in the form of *nididhyāsana* is verbal testimony (*śabda-pramāṇa*); so from this too it is possible for knowledge of Brahman to be a *pramā*. However, the principal opinion of Advaita texts is that immediately after the knowledge caused by the *mahā-vākyas*, there is no need for *prasaṅkhyāna*, but the immediate perception of non-dual Brahman occurs via the *mahā-vākyas* themselves. Together with one-pointedness caused by *nididhyāsana*, the mind is an accessory in the knowledge of Brahman, but the words in the form

of the Vedānta statements alone are the means of knowledge of Brahman; the mind is not the means. *Śruti* (*KeU* 1.6) states that Brahman cannot be the object of a mental cognition; only verbal testimony (*śabda*) in the form of the Upaniṣads can be the instrument of the knowledge of Brahman. Therefore, *śabda* alone is the instrument of the direct perception of Brahman, and not the mind.

Although *śabda* has the capacity for producing only mediate knowledge, yet, after performing *śravaṇa* as described in the *śāstras*, immediate knowledge pertaining to Brahman can arise via *śabda* qualified by the impressions (*saṃskāra*) of mediate knowledge and accompanied by one-pointed consciousness. The immediate knowledge of Brahman is possible only through *śabda*, when assisted by a pure, steady mind qualified by the impressions of the mediate knowledge of Brahman. *Śruti* speaks of the cessation of all suffering in the form of superimposition, which occurs through the knowledge of Brahman. Because the superimpositions such as agency (*kartṛtva*), etc., are immediate, their cessation is not possible through mediate knowledge of Brahman; only by immediate knowledge of Brahman can the cessation of immediate superimposition be brought about. Since the other *pramāṇas* besides *śabda* do not pertain to Brahman and since the cessation of immediate superimposition does not occur without immediate knowledge of Brahman, the immediate knowledge of Brahman is proven to occur only through *śabda*. The immediate knowledge of Brahman caused by *śabda* is established through the means of postulation on the basis of what is heard (*śrutārthāpatti*).

Alternatively, immediacy is dependent on the object, and not on the means of cognition. Therefore, the cognition of an immediate object is immediate itself, whether it be via the senses or by other means of cognition. Brahman-consciousness is always immediate since the cognizer-consciousness is always identical to Brahman-consciousness, and therefore the knowledge of Brahman produced by verbal testimony (*śabda pramāṇa*) in the form of the *mahā-vākyas* is also considered to be immediate. The Upaniṣadic subsidiary statements do not have the capability to produce immediate cognition; only the *mahā-vākyas* have this capability. Nīścaldās explains this through the definition of an immediate cognition. An immediate object is defined as the identity of the unconcealed object with consciousness favorable (*anukūla*) to its function (*vyavahāra*). Immediate cognition is defined as the identity of consciousness suitable to its function with the unconcealed object. Since the identity of *jīva* with Brahman is ever-present, even with the identity of concealed Brahman with consciousness suitable to its function in the state of *saṃsāra*,

due to Brahman being concealed, there is no identity of the object as the unconcealed Brahman with consciousness suitable to its function. Therefore, the immediacy of Brahman does not occur. Similarly, since the knowledge caused by the subsidiary Upaniṣadic statements is identical with the object in the form of concealed Brahman, immediacy does not apply to the knowledge.

10.5.13 The Use and Result of a *Vṛtti*

Three questions were presented at the start of the *VP*: 1) What is the nature of a *vṛtti*? 2) What is the cause of a *vṛtti*? 3) What is the use and result of a *vṛtti*? A *vṛtti* was generally defined as “the modification of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* and ignorance,” and it takes the form of illumination of the object of perception. Its particular nature was described via its differences, based on truth (*yathārthatva*), falsity (*ayathārthatva*), etc. Through the description of the means of cognition, the cause of a *vṛtti* was also stated. Now Niścaldās can answer the third question pertaining to the purpose of a *vṛtti*: the relation of the *jīva* with all three states (waking, dreaming, and deep sleep) occurs by means of a *vṛtti*, and the attainment of liberation (*puruṣārtha*) is also by means of a *vṛtti*.

The waking state is defined as the time that is the basis (*ādhāra*) for sense-caused cognition and the impressions (*saṃskāra*) of sense-caused cognition, and that is different from the dream and deep sleep states. Thus, the waking state function is dependent on sense-caused cognition, which is in the form of a *vṛtti* of the *antaḥ-karaṇa*. The *jīva* is that which has ignorance as its *upādhi*. Even when an object has a relation with that *jīva*-consciousness, the function of being known, etc., in the object as well as the cognizer’s conception (*abhimāna*) of that function only occurs by the relation of the cognizer to the object, and it is the function of the *vṛtti* to effect this relation since the cognizer resides in a location different from the object and does not always have a relation with the object.

The dream state is the state of the immediate (*aparokṣa*) *vṛtti* of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* pertaining to an object, which is not caused by the senses. In the dream, both the cognition and the cognizer are the modifications of the *antaḥ-karaṇa*.

Deep sleep is the state of the *vṛtti* pertaining to pleasure and ignorance (*avidyā*) in the form of the immediate (*sākṣāt*) modification of ignorance (*ajñāna*) because, in deep sleep, the witness seated in the *vṛtti* of ignorance illuminates the ignorance and the pleasure that is its nature (*svarūpa-sukha*). In deep sleep, a person’s *antaḥ-karaṇa* becomes absorbed (*līna*) in the portion

of ignorance that has been modified into pleasure and resides there. Then, at the time of waking, that portion of ignorance is modified into the *antaḥ-karaṇa*, and the pleasure experienced in deep sleep is recollected by means of a *vr̥tti* of ignorance.

The conception (*abhimāna*) of the three states in this fashion is itself bondage. Erroneous cognition (*bhrama-jñāna*) is called conception, which is just a particular *vr̥tti*. Therefore, *saṃsāra* is nothing but bondage caused by *vr̥tti*. When a *vr̥tti* of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* occurs by means of the Vedānta statement that “*ahaṃ brahmāsmi*, I am Brahman” (*BU* 1.4.10), then this *vr̥tti* causes the cessation of ignorance along with the material creation (*prapañca*), and that itself is liberation. Thus, in *saṃsāra*, the purpose of *vr̥ttis* is to establish empirical reality, whereas the highest purpose of a *vr̥tti* is for liberation, i.e., knowing absolute reality, whereby *saṃsāra* conceived in the empirical state is negated.

10.5.14 The Cessation of the Conceived (*Kalpita kī Nivṛtti*)

Liberation, or the cessation of the conceived, is in the form of the known substratum. In other words, Brahman, as the substratum of all superimpositions, is not something that is unknown. In making this argument, Nīścaldās draws on the fact that the *śāstras* (scripture) and wise persons describe Brahman as the ultimate real substance. To say that “the cessation of *saṃsāra* is liberation” establishes that Brahman is liberation. At the time of liberation, Brahman is not qualified (*viśiṣṭa*) by, or limited by (*upahita*), known-ness (*jñātatva*). In the state of liberation, there is no present relation with known-ness (*jñātatva*), but the known-ness attribute has occurred previously, and therefore, although the substratum is not qualified (*viśiṣṭa*) or conditioned (*upahita*) by known-ness, it is however designated (*upalakṣita*) by known-ness. Prior to the arising of known-ness, in the state of *saṃsāra*, the substratum is not designated by known-ness. But, subsequent to the known-ness arising, even in its absence, the substratum can be designated by known-ness, and its nature is the cessation of *saṃsāra*. The cessation of the *anirvacanīya* conceived is also *anirvacanīya* itself and momentary. The cessation of the conceived remains for only one instant after knowledge, and does not cause duality. After one instant, the absolute absence of that cessation of the conceived occurs, and that is in the form of Brahman. This cessation of the conceived, i.e., the cessation of sorrow, is not the human pursuit (*puruṣārtha*) as it exists only momentarily. If only the absence of sorrow were the object of a person’s desire, then a person would not have desire for the pleasure that is totally eclipsed by

sorrow. The desire of a person for the absence of sorrow also occurs for the sake of natural happiness alone. Therefore, the principal human pursuit is not the absence of sorrow, but only happiness. Ignorance, the visible creation in the form of existence and non-existence as well as their cessation all are *anirvacanīya*. The negation of them all is liberation in the form of the substratum, and that is of the nature of non-duality, ultimate happiness (*paramānanda*), and the highest human pursuit. With this, the *VP* concludes.

10.6 The Completeness of the *VP*

Though the progression of ideas in the *VP* is logical, the end might appear abrupt. Was the text completed? Nīścaldās's successor Dayārām, in his letter reporting Nīścaldās's final days to Rājā Rāmsiṃha, mentions that seven chapters had been completed and the eighth was also complete; only the conclusion was lacking at the time of Nīścaldās's death. It is unclear who compiled the final version of the text.⁶¹⁷ Concerning the apparent abruptness of the *VP*'s ending, let us compare it to other Vedānta texts. Nīścaldās devotes just ten pages to the nature of liberation, described as “the cessation of the conceived” (*VP* 8.161-72, 436-46), the majority of which is taken up with presenting and refuting opposing views, particularly that of the *Nyāya-makaranda* that the cessation of the conceived is of a fifth kind, other than the four possibilities of true, false, both-true-and-false, and neither-true-nor-false. Thus, the actual description of the cessation of the conceived amounts to being fewer than two pages (*VP* 8.171-2, 444-6) and constitutes the end of the text. Now, if we look at the *Samkṣepa-śārīraka* (1050 CE), there too, the nature of liberation is described in the last and by far the shortest of its four chapters, comprising only 63 verses (where the total text runs to 1240 verses). Approximately 30 of these verses describe the fruits of self-knowledge, the fact that liberation is identical to the *ātmā*, and

⁶¹⁷ Dayārām writes: “*vṛtti dīpikā likhī hai sau yah samācār hai. sapta prakāś varṇe the unmātai kuch kāḍhai bī hai aur ghāle bī hai, aur āthvām prakāś baṇāvai the so hazār pāth baṇā itne maiṃ śārīrānt ho gayā. iti śrī to huī nahīṃ aur padārth bahut se likhe gae aur hazūr ne yah pūchā ki mahārāj kā mukhārvind dvārā kisai sādhu nai suṇā hovai uskā nām likhiyo cho nām kiskā likhe, sutantra rahne vāle pānc sāt sādhu to pahle the so mahārāj kā śārīr pūrā hotāi kitnek to cale gaye aur kitnek sādhu pustak likhte haiṃ? granth to pūrā ho gayā par iti śrī hone kī kasar bāki rah gai likhaṃ parhaṃ vālā kā ihām to ausāṃ nahīṃ āvtā parantu sutantra haiṃ sau dādūdāvare kā melā karṇe āveṃge jad ghaṇas re uhām ikase āye hoveṃge jad dekhā jāvegā.* The news regarding the *Vṛtti Dīpikā* [possibly the “working title” of the *VP*] is that seven chapters were written and edited[?, *kāḍhā* and *ghālnā*]. And the eight chapter that was written was very long, when [Nīścaldās] passed away before finalizing it. And Your Highness [Rājā Rāmsiṃha] had asked for the name of any *sādhu* who might have heard the text directly from [Nīścaldās]. What to say of those, there were five to seven earlier, most of whom left on [Nīścaldās]’s death, and as it is, how many *sādhus* write books? The [*VP*] text was completed, it just fell short of being concluded. There is nobody literate here. But, when your [Rājā Rāmsiṃha]’s esteemed self comes for the festival at Dādū Dvārā, at that time many [*sādhus*?] will have gathered there, then we’ll see [what to do about compiling the final version of the text?]” (Siṃha 1981, 13). [The punctuation in the Hindi text above is my editorial judgment. The only punctuation in the source is a *daṇḍa* after “*śārīrānt ho gayā.*”]

whether liberation is embodied (*jīvan-mukti*) or immediate. The remaining verses deal with the disciple's introductory question, refutations of the efficacy of karma for effecting liberation, whether the cessation of the ignorance is of the fifth kind, and closing dedicatory verses. As another point of comparison,⁶¹⁸ consider the *Iṣṭa-siddhi* by Vimuktātman (850-976 CE), comprising 602 verses and eight chapters. The last chapter examines the removal of ignorance and has only 28 verses, just four of which (8.24-28) deal with the nature of liberation, while the earlier verses refute incorrect notions of the nature of the cessation of the conceived.

From this rather brief comparison, it becomes clear that these authors were concerned primarily with refuting incorrect and unhelpful notions that hinder the understanding of one's identity with Brahman and perhaps felt that, since the process of correcting these mistaken notions leads one to direct experience of one's self and Brahman, there is no need to say much more on the topic. Hence, I would surmise that Nīścaldās's *VP*, rather than being brought to an abrupt end by his passing, is mostly complete in the form that we have it. It is likely that Nīścaldās had already laid out the sections and may have intended to further flesh out the content of some portions and perhaps to add a concluding *dohā* or two as he did at the end of the major section dealing with *anirvacanīya-khyāti* (in section 6.3.1, p. 178). However, I am unable to identify any glaring absences and believe that the text as we have today forms a cohesive whole, despite Nīścaldās's untimely demise.

10.7 Resolution of Differences in Positions

After working through the entire *VP*, one is left with the sense of Nīścaldās as an extremely well-read Advaita scholar, intimately familiar with Nyāya, Mīmāṃsā, and Advaita texts up to his time (See Appendix: Works and Authors Cited in *VP*, p. 409). He is not just regurgitating the ideas of his predecessors but is presenting a careful, reasoned analysis of the relative merits and demerits of various views and occasionally advancing his own refinements and clarifications. What follows is an enumeration of instances where Nīścaldās presents differences in the standpoints of past Advaitins, and a look at how Nīścaldās resolves these in each case.

⁶¹⁸ Advaita texts are legion. I have deliberately chosen Sarvajñātman's *Samkṣepa-śārīraka* (*SS*) and Vimuktātman's *Iṣṭa-siddhi* for comparison of their length of treatment of the state of liberation, or the cessation of the conceived, because they both also consider whether the cessation of ignorance is of the fifth type, as Ānandabodha does. In fact, the *Iṣṭa-siddhi* is the source for Ānandabodha's *Nyāya-makaranda* conception of the cessation of ignorance being the fifth type as discussed in the *VP* by Nīścaldās, and possibly also for Sarvajñātman (Vimuktātman 1933, xxxv-vi).

In describing the sense-organs, Niścaldās presents Vācaspati Mīśra's view that the mind is a sense-organ that validly cognizes happiness, sorrow, etc., and contrasts it with Padmapāda's view that the mind is not accepted as a sense-organ and, instead, happiness and sorrow are revealed by the witness-consciousness (*sākṣī*). First, Niścaldās enumerates four defects pertaining to Vācaspati's position: 1) unlike the other five senses, the mind does not have a special object; 2) *BhG* 3.42, where the mind is said to be "superior to the senses, *indriyebhyaḥ paraṃ manaḥ*," does not include mind among the senses; 3) by accepting the mind as a separate sense-organ, Vācaspati suggests that Brahman-realization is mental, which is opposed to scripture; 4) the mind is a state of the *antaḥ-karaṇa*, which, being the locus of immediate cognition, is the agent of cognition, and that which is the agent (*kartā*), cannot be the instrument (*karaṇa*). But then Niścaldās proceeds to show that these are not truly defects: 1) happiness, sorrow, desire, etc., are the special objects of the mind; 2) in *BhG* 3.42, *indriyas* denote external sense organs, and thus there is no conflict to say that the mind is superior to the external sense organs; 3) Brahman is neither an object of the mind, nor of a *vṛtti*, except for the *vṛtti* removes the ignorance which conceals Brahman; 4) the *antaḥ-karaṇa* can be the agent by virtue of being the locus (*āśraya*) of cognition, and the mind, as the modification of *antaḥ-karaṇa*, can be an instrument of valid cognition, and therefore, also a means of cognition (*pramāṇa*). Niścaldās states that it does not damage one's understanding of Vedānta, i.e., one's knowledge of Brahman, whether one accepts Vācaspati's view that the mind is a sense-organ, or not.⁶¹⁹ Niścaldās seems to suggest that, since neither view of the mind hinders a seeker's attainment of Brahman, one is free to choose the view that personally resonates best. He essentially shows through extensive use of logical analysis that neither position on this matter conflicts with scripture and thus has no adverse soteriological effect.

Niścaldās does not hesitate to point out flaws in the *Vedānta-paribhāṣā* and its commentary with regard to analogy (*upamiti*) (*VP* 4.5, 96-98). The author of the *Vedānta-paribhāṣā*, Dharmarāja Adhvarīndra (1550-1650 CE), defines the means of analogy (*upamāna*) as the cognition of similarity,⁶²⁰ but Niścaldās holds that a better definition of analogical cognition is that which arises from the cognition of either similarity or dissimilarity; otherwise, there will be

⁶¹⁹ Mayeda suggested the same for Śaṅkara: "It is not important at all to Śaṅkara whether or not the *manas* [mind] is an *indriya* [sense-organ]: what he wishes to emphasize is that neither *manas* nor the *indriyas* are *Ātman*" (Śaṅkarācārya 2006, 2:33).

⁶²⁰ *sādṛśya-pramā-karaṇam upamānam* (Dharmarājādhvarīndra, Rāmakṛṣṇādhvarin, and Amaradāsa 2000, 245).

no favorable analogical example for *ātmā*, since there is nothing similar to it. Niścaldās also takes to task Dharmarāja's son, Rāmakṛṣṇa Dīkṣita (1625-1700 CE), the author of *Śikhāmaṇi* commentary on *Vedānta-paribhāṣā*, for suggesting that an analogical cognition is not caused by the cognition of dissimilarity.⁶²¹ When one states, “your face is like [i.e., analogous to] the moon,” the similarity between the face and the moon is directly perceived, but the analogical cognition here is a rhetorical figure of speech (*upamālaṅkāra*). The face-moon analogy example is actually from the *Maṇiprabhā* sub-commentary to the *Vedānta-paribhāṣā* (by Amaradāsa, nineteenth c.). However, Niścaldās concedes that to explain this further would be difficult and also unproductive [for Brahman-realization]. Even though it is explained in texts such as the *Alaṅkāra-candrikā* (a seventeenth century text on rhetoric by Gajapati Vīra Nārāyaṇadeva) and others, he does not develop this further. This gives us an example of Niścaldās's use of reason to clarify one's understanding of analogy as a means of cognition and also of his thorough reading of the secondary literature, his refusal to let any misstatements pass unchecked, yet, at the same time, his constant focus on that which is necessary for explaining the knowledge of Brahman to his reader. Pointing out the defect in Rāmakṛṣṇa's logic here serves to remind his readers that they are in the hands of a knowledgeable guide⁶²² who will leave no stone unturned to deliver his reader to Brahman-realization, while at the same time saving the reader from having to deal with exploring unproductive approaches or from developing an improper understanding of the means which might delay one on the pursuit of the knowledge of Brahman.

In explaining *anirvacanīya-khyāti*, Niścaldās presents two different descriptions of the agency of superimposition. According to Sarvajñātman in the *Samkṣepa-śārīraka*, the property of being the substratum (*adhiṣṭhānatā*) is in the particular portion of the object and not in the general portion, whereas the property of being the locus (*ādhāratā*) is in the general portion. However, Prakāśātman, the author of the *Pañcapādikā Vivaraṇa* (PPV), holds that the property of being a substratum is in the general portion alone, and the content of valid cognition is the

⁶²¹ Rāmakṛṣṇa writes: “*na ca go-visadrṣa uṣṭra iti vaidharmya-jñāna-janyānena visadrṣī madīyā gāur ity upamitāv avyāptiḥ tatropamāna-pramāṇyānabhyupagamāt. na hi kaścid anuvyavasyati karabhena gām upaminomīti*. Our definition [of analogical cognition] does not fall short of covering the case where the analogical cognition, ‘my cow is different,’ may result from the cognition of the difference, ‘the camel is different from a cow,’ because the means of analogical cognition do not apply there, and neither does anyone subsequently realize, ‘I cognize a cow by analogy to a camel’” (Dharmarājādharīndra, Rāmakṛṣṇādharīn, and Amaradāsa 2000, 247).

⁶²² Similarly, when presenting the competing theory of *sat-khyāti* after having explained the Advaita view of *anirvacanīya-khyāti*, Niścaldās states that although *sat-khyāti* is not fit to be written about, however, if it were not described anywhere, the reader might conclude that the author was not aware of *sat-khyāti*, therefore, Niścaldās has written about *sat-khyāti* only to dispel this incorrect conclusion (VP 7.46, 281). See n. 431, p. 207.

object's "this-ness," which opposes the object's projection power, but, even when the "this-ness" is known, the content of the ignorance due to concealing power is still possible. Nīścaldās reconciles these views, suggesting that both the ignorance-caused concealing, i.e., erroneous cognition, as well as the overthrow of concealment via a valid cognition occur in consciousness alone. The substratum of all superimpositions is also consciousness. Based on this, Nīścaldās shows that the two views are simply different ways of conceiving erroneous cognition and that both these views are soundly defensible against objections. But once again, this reconciliation suggests that Nīścaldās simply wants the reader to understand the Advaita *siddhānta* that all is Brahman as consciousness, and, as long as one understands this, either viewpoint is efficacious. Once again, as in the issue regarding whether the mind is a sense-organ or not, neither viewpoint in this current case conflicts with scripture and thus has no adverse soteriological effect.

Nīścaldās also explores at great length both the view of an Advaitin named Kavitārka Cakravartī Nṛsiṃha Bhaṭṭopādhyāya (KCNB) that the contact of the eyes with the substratum alone is the cause for superimposition and the debate between KCNB and the proponent of substantive cognition (*dharmi-jñāna-vādin*, DJV). Although KCNB is also an Advaitin, Nīścaldās considers KCNB's view to be "against traditional views (*sāmpradāyika vacana taiṃ viruddha*)" and hence unacceptable. However, at the conclusion of his presentation of the KCNB-DJV debates, Nīścaldās states that the various views considered "have similar merits and demerits. In truth, the intent of Advaita is only to demonstrate the unreality of empirical world; there is no purpose apart from this in propounding or refuting subdivisions (*avāntara bheda*). Thus, even if some refuted, incorrect view helps a seeker understand this, there is no harm. But here we have provided the reasoning only according to one view in order to prevent [a seeker] from going off on a wrong path, other than the way [shown by] the ancient teachers (*prācīna ācārya*)."⁶²³ The only reason the "correct" view is pointed out is to help the seeker follow the path of the ancient, enlightened teachers. Here again, Nīścaldās demonstrates his ever-present focus on the soteriological goal desired of his undertaking to write the *VP*, namely, to aid the reader in achieving the knowledge of Brahman, the ultimate and only reality. However, at the same time we see his respect for the Advaita tradition. Similarly, in the *VS*, when Nīścaldās disagrees with Vidyāraṇya and others who hold that *śravaṇa*, *manana* and *nididhyāsana* all are

⁶²³ *VP* 7.39, 275. See n. 426, p. 204, for the Hindi text.

required to gain immediate cognition (*aparokṣa-jñāna*) of Brahman (*VS* 1.21-3; also n. 200, p. 200), he provides the means to reconcile their position with the correct view (*siddhānta*) of Vedānta.

Nīścaldās reiterates the soteriological priority of Vedānta when he refutes potential arguments from the *ātma-khyāti* standpoint, namely, that the Vedānta presentation of superimposition incurs the fallacy of unknown conception (*aprasiddha kalpanā doṣa*) due to its conception of a logically indeterminate (*anirvacanīya*) silver appearing in place of the mother-of-pearl and that *ātma-khyāti* has economy over *anirvacanīya-khyāti* due to not requiring one to imagine *anirvacanīya* objects. Nīścaldās states that the primary view (*mukhya siddhānta*) of Advaita is that there is only one consciousness and it is real; the entire creation (*prapañca*) apart from consciousness is false, or *anirvacanīya*. Thus, for Advaita, the true fallacy of unknown conception is to consider any object other than consciousness to be real. Nīścaldās holds that, other than *anirvacanīya-khyāti*, no other theory of error can elucidate non-duality. Thus, it is unproductive to talk of economy or lack thereof; nevertheless, he proceeds to demonstrate that it is the *ātma-khyāti* view that suffers a lack of economy instead.

While describing the nature of the cessation of ignorance after Brahman-realization, Nīścaldās refutes Sarvajñātman's view that there is no trace-ignorance left after the realization (*VP* 8.118-20, 416-7; section 9.1.1, p. 315ff.), saying that this view “contradicts the knower's experience (*jñānī ke anubhava ke viruddha hai*).” Since the reader of the *VP* is presumably reading the text in order to gain the knowledge of Brahman and lacks the “knower's experience,” this remark only serves to remind the reader, in a very understated yet direct way, that Nīścaldās himself is speaking from experience. But this cannot also be construed as Nīścaldās suggesting that Sarvajñātman did not have the knowledge of Brahman, given the high, albeit not uncritical, regard displayed by Nīścaldās for Sarvajñātman; therefore, one gathers that once again Nīścaldās is merely attempting to clarify the situation and forestall any misunderstanding on the seeker's part.

When Nīścaldās is describing Vidyāraṇya's Theory of Appearance (*ābhāsa-vāda*) (in *VP* 8.9-18, 348-55; section 7.4.1, p. 239ff.), he demonstrates the impossibility of Vidyāraṇya's stance that Īśvara is the appearance in the ignorance qualified by the collective latent tendencies of the intellect (*buddhi-vāsanā*) in the form of the sheath consisting of happiness (*ānandamaya-kośa*). However, he does not find fault with Vidyāraṇya but rather with the understanding of

Vidyāraṇya's teachings resulting from study without benefit of a teacher or tradition. Nīścaldās goes on to show that in other parts of the *PD*, Vidyāraṇya's understanding conforms with the teachings of the *MāU*, and indeed, Vidyāraṇya holds that the *ānandamaya-kośa* is of the *jīva* alone. Further, the mention of Īśvara-ness in the *ānandamaya-kośa* that occurs in the *Citra-dīpa* (*PD* 6) is for the purpose of contemplation of the *jīva*'s identity with Īśvara alone, just as in the *MāU* (*VP* 8.19, 355; section 7.4.1, p. 246ff.).

Of the four theories regarding the relation of *jīva* and Īśvara, Nīścaldās gives the least attention to the Theory of Delimitation (*avaccheda-vāda*) of the *Bhāmatī* tradition, possibly because he disagrees with its view that the *jīva* is consciousness delimited by the *antaḥ-karaṇa*, and because, since the theory holds that formless consciousness cannot be reflected, its proponents must work harder to address the contradiction of *śruti* and *smṛti* texts that propound the reflection of consciousness. But Nīścaldās nonetheless accepts this theory because "many Advaita authors" have propounded it, and it is acceptable as long as one does not accept the version that holds the *jīva* to be consciousness delimited by the *antaḥ-karaṇa*. In this context, in the *VS*, he again states that, even though Śaṅkara has propounded the Theory of Appearance in his *Vākya-vṛtti* and *Upadeśa-sāhasrī*, "all methods of Vedānta are for the sake of causing the knowledge of the non-dual *ātmā*; by whichever method the seeker gains this knowledge, that method alone is right for her."⁶²⁴ Going on to contrast the *Vivaraṇa*'s Theory of Reflection and Vidyāraṇya's Theory of Appearance, Nīścaldās points out that in the former, the nature of the reflection is real, while in the latter, it is false. Nevertheless, he states that both views are acceptable since the purpose is only to show that consciousness cannot possibly have the property of *saṃsāra* and that there is no mutual difference between *jīva* and Īśvara. Thus, any view that leads the seeker to understand the unattached Brahman is respectable. However, Nīścaldās does suggest that it is easier to understand the identity of unattached Brahman and *ātmā* by the *Vivaraṇa* view, and, from the perspective of grasping the essence, only the Theory of Appearance and the Theory of Reflection are reasonable. Yet again, the Advaita tradition is respected, yet the different views are evaluated on the basis of soteriological efficacy.

In discussing the feasibility of the perception of space by means of a *vṛtti*, Nīścaldās finds fault with both Sarvajñātman's conception in the *SS*, and Nṛsiṃhāśrama's conception in the

⁶²⁴ *VS* 6.442, 275: *sarva hī vedānt kī prakriyā advaita-ātmā ke janāvanai kūṃ hai. yātaiṃ jaunsī prakriyā taiṃ jijiṇāsu kūṃ bodha hovai, soī tākūṃ samīcīna hai.*

Advaita-dīpikā. Sarvajñātman's immediate perception of space by means of the mind requires the acceptance, on the basis of the result (*phala-bala-taiṃ*), of the relation of the *antaḥ-karaṇa*'s *vr̥tti* with external space, assisted by an eye-*vr̥tti* of another form (*anyākāra*). For Nṛsiṃhāśrama, the immediate cognition of space requires the acceptance of an eye-*vr̥tti* that has the form of sight (*āloka*) [of light] spread over space, once again on the basis of the result. Their explanations for their respective scenarios are somewhat unsatisfactory, as Nīścaldās himself concedes,⁶²⁵ but he allows for their feasibility “on the basis of the result,” i.e., the pragmatic consideration that we *do* perceive space immediately. It is appropriate to allow for immediate perception either via the senses or via self-illumination, as opposed to via the mind. Hence, the *Advaita-dīpikā* conception, albeit flawed, is the “better” explanation (*VP* 8.71-2, 390-2; section 8.2.3, p. 285ff.). Nīścaldās's explanation of why the *SŚ* would even suggest its “more flawed” scheme will be deferred until the next section. Thus, the *SŚ* and *Advaita-dīpikā* views are evaluated through the use of reason, and, while their interpretations are not outright rejected due to an implicit respect for the tradition, they are also not uncritically accepted.

The cases of divergences among Advaita texts pointed out by Nīścaldās in the *VP* that have been described in this section thus show some notable patterns. In all of these cases, there is considerable display of the use of reason and logical analysis to evaluate conflicting positions, which constitute the practice of philosophy. Frequently, Nīścaldās demonstrates that the different positions have equal soteriological efficacy and are not in conflict with scripture; thus, one's attainment of the knowledge of Brahman is not harmed by adopting any particular position. This is his conclusion in the matter of whether or not the mind is a sense-organ. In the case of whether the property of being the substratum of the superimposition resides in the particular portion of the object, per Sarvajñātman, or in the general portion, per Prakāśātman, here too, Nīścaldās demonstrates that both positions are valid. In summarizing the KCNB-DJV debate on the nature of superimposition, Nīścaldās concedes that the various views considered have similar merits and demerits and that any of these views may help one understand the unreality of the empirical world, but it is important to follow the “correct” way shown by enlightened teachers in the

⁶²⁵ “The immediate cognition of one [object] by a *vr̥tti* in the form of another, in the manner of the *Advaita-dīpikā*, is not well known, and its acceptance is a defect, *advaita-dīpikā kī rīti saim anyākāra-vr̥tti-saim anyā kī aparokṣatā aprasiddha hai, tākā aṅgīkāra doṣa hai...*, and the relation (*gocaratā*) of the *antaḥ-karaṇa* to external objects, in the manner of the *Samkṣepa-śārīraka*, is not known, and its acceptance is a defect, *au samkṣepa-śārīraka rīti saim bāhya-padārtha main antaḥ-karaṇa-gocaratā aprasiddha hai, tākā aṅgīkāra doṣa hai...*” (*VP* 8.72, 391).

tradition. In explaining Vidyāraṇya's apparent stance that Īśvara is in the sheath consisting of happiness (*ānandamaya-kośa*), Nīścaldās shows his respect for tradition by demonstrating that this is a misunderstanding of Vidyāraṇya view and suggests that this can be avoided by studying with a teacher within the tradition. When presenting the four different theories regarding the relation of *jīva* and Īśvara, he considers them all soteriologically efficacious. He accepts the *Bhāmatī* Theory of Delimitation (*avaccheda-vāda*) because others in the tradition have supported it, even though he does not spend much time discussing it. The Theory of Appearance has the added benefit of having been accepted by Śaṅkara, and Nīścaldās accepts it as well as the *Vivaraṇa* Theory of Reflection as helpful for the seeker to know Brahman, even though the latter is the easier of the two.

But Nīścaldās does not uncritically accept all traditional views. He revises the *Vedānta-paribhāṣā* definition of analogical cognition and points out flaws in its *Śikhāmaṇi* commentary, as if to remind the readers that he is giving them the benefit of his knowledge by pointing out incorrect positions when needed. He is particularly vigorous when refuting views outside the Advaita system such as *ātma-khyāti* and the other theories of erroneous cognition, but his motive is purely to enable the seeker to attain the proper understanding of non-duality and to forestall any potential misunderstanding. He draws on the understanding and experience of a knower (*jñānī*) of Brahman to clarify issues, such as when he refutes Sarvajñātman's view that there is no trace-ignorance left after the realization, and implicitly reminds us that he himself is a knower of Brahman. He also finds fault with both Sarvajñātman and Nṛsiṃhāśrama's views of the immediate perception of space, but, since they are both respected members of the Advaita tradition, presents a means to reconcile their interpretations.

10.7.1 The *Praudhi-vāda* Strategy of Reconciling Conflicting Views

In some cases where Nīścaldās sees a disagreement between two views, he reconciles the incorrect view by suggesting that the originator was engaging in *praudhi-vāda*, an extravagant argument. At the very least, it appears to be a gentle stratagem to explain the defect in the position of a proponent who is highly regarded in the tradition while alerting the reader that the particular position is not soteriologically productive. Nīścaldās defines *praudhi-vāda* as the temporary acceptance of the opponents' view in the process of refuting their objections to one's own view (*VP* 6.35, 191). Thus, where the immediate (*pratyakṣa*) cognition of non-existence is

claimed by the authors of texts such as the *Bheda-dhik-kāra* and *Vedānta-paribhāṣā*, Nīścaldās suggests these authors were engaged in *prauḍhi-vāda*, and, in actuality, the knowledge of non-existence due to non-cognition is always mediate (*VP* 6.35, 191). However, Nīścaldās does not leave it at that; he proceeds to show at length how these views are incomplete, and provides a tighter definition of non-cognition (*VP* 6.31-34, 178-87; section 5.4.6, p. 388).

In discussing Vidyāraṇya's statement that principal (grammatical) coordination (*mukhya-samānādhikaraṇya*) of the *jīva* with Brahman is possible in the *mahā-vākyas* even though the reflection is considered false in Vidyāraṇya's Theory of Appearance, Nīścaldās suggests that it may be reconciled with the *Vivaraṇa* view by understanding Vidyāraṇya's statement as *prauḍhi-vāda*, an extravagant assertion. However, Nīścaldās does state that, in this case, Vidyāraṇya has imposed his opinion on the *Vivaraṇa* text, and he clearly demonstrates that Vidyāraṇya's view is incorrect (*VP* 8.14, 350-1; section 7.4.1, p. 242). Here too, Nīścaldās is pointing out a defect in the argument of Vidyāraṇya who is revered within the Advaita tradition and seeks to excuse Vidyāraṇya's overreach, but at the same time he helps the reader understand the right view and reach a clear understanding.

Similarly, when the *Samkṣepa-sārīraka* asserts that space can be immediately cognized only by the mind, Nīścaldās points out that the explanation is not satisfactory. He then offers Nṛsiṃhāśrama's *Advaita-dīpikā* conception as a "better, though still flawed" explanation,⁶²⁶ even though both Sarvajñātman and Nṛsiṃhāśrama's explanations are accepted "on the basis of the result (*phala-bala-taiṃ*).” Nīścaldās then explains Sarvajñātman's claim of the immediate mental perception of space as *prauḍhi-vāda*, an extravagant assertion, and explains that in fact the immediate cognition of the substratum only occurs via the senses or via self-illumination, never via the mind (*VP* 8.71-2, 390-2; section 8.2.3, p. 285ff.). As presented by Nīścaldās, even the *Advaita-dīpikā* explanation ought to be explained as *prauḍhi-vāda*, but Nīścaldās does not do so possibly because Nṛsiṃhāśrama explains further that the *antaḥ-karaṇa*'s *vṛtti* in the form of the sight (*āloka*) of the light, which spreads through the all-pervasive space and thus assists in the

⁶²⁶ In all fairness, that is not Nṛsiṃhāśrama's final explanation. His *siddhānta* (conclusion) is that "space/sky is known by the witness consciousness, and the color blue is superimposed on it, ... *asmād ukta-vidhayā sākṣi-vedye gagane nīlam āropa iti*" (Nṛsiṃhāśrama, Nārāyaṇāśrama, and Subrahmanya Sastri 1982, 2:418). For the full discussion see Nṛsiṃhāśrama (1982, 2:415-8). Further, in Advaita epistemology, each of the five basic elements is connected with a sense-organ, and space, being the medium of sound, is associated with the ear, and is not really considered perceptible by the eye, as it has no form/color.

perception of space, is itself manifest in the witness-illuminated, i.e., self-illuminated, space.⁶²⁷ By describing the *ŚŚ* argument as *prauḍhi-vāda*, Nīścaldās, at one and the same time, marks the argument as flawed and inconsistent with the Advaita doctrine, yet also allows its proponent, Sarvajñātman, the benefit of the doubt. He implicitly accepts that Sarvajñātman, as part of the teaching Advaita tradition, was a knower of Brahman, and thus there must have been a good reason for him to present a flawed argument.

Nīścaldās even uses the *prauḍhi-vāda* stratagem to reconcile his own assertion in *VS* 6.306, 186, that dreams are perceived by illusory senses, an assertion that contradicts *śruti* (specifically *BU* 4.3.9, which states that dreams are self-illuminated) and is thus incorrect (*VP* 8.75, 393). The implication is that although the *VS* assertion is incorrect, it was knowingly stated to simplify the discussion and renders no harm to Advaita's soteriological efficacy. Also in the *VS*, in the section refuting non-Advaita views on direct significatory relation (*śakti-vṛtti*), the commentator, Pt. Pītāmbār, explains that here Nīścaldās accepts the flawed position of *kevala-bheda*, the acceptance of difference between the signifier (*vācaka*) and the signified (*vācya*), that the Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsaka opponent accuses Advaita of, and still refutes the Bhāṭṭa objection (*VS* 6.425-7, 263-5). The *prauḍhi-vāda* explanation is also used by other Vedāntins, for example, by Appayya Dīkṣita (1973, 274).

10.8 Diversity of Doctrinal Interpretations

We have seen Nīścaldās deal with differences in doctrinal interpretations in the previous section. There is a long tradition, even within Advaita Vedānta itself, of attempting to explain the diversity of both traditional and current doctrinal interpretations. An oft-cited couplet of Sureśvara, Śaṅkara's senior-most disciple, states, "By whatever system one learns of the inner self, that itself is [considered] proper here [in Vedānta even if the system is] unsteady."⁶²⁸ Sureśvara may only be reflecting his teacher's sentiments. As Ingalls (and many others) have noted, "[Śaṅkara] concentrates on what he considers the heart of the matter, the teaching that is necessary for the attainment of *mokṣa*. This teaching is that *avidyā*, whatever its modality, is

⁶²⁷ *kintu sarvagatākāśo 'pi prasṛta-prakāśākārāntaḥ-karaṇa-vṛtty-abhivyaakta-sākṣi-bhāsyam ākāśam* (Nṛsiṃhāśrama, Nārāyaṇāśrama, and Subrahmanya Sastri 1982, 2:416).

⁶²⁸ *BU Bh. Vārtika* 1.4.402: *yayā yayā bhavet puṃsām vyutpattiḥ pratyag-ātmani; sā saiva prakriyeha syāt sādhvī sā cānavasthitā* (Sureśvarācārya and Ānandagiri 1982, 342). Vidyāranya quoted the first three *pādas* in *PD* 8.72, and in its entirety in *Anubhūti-prakāśa* 13.95 (1983, 96) or 13.108 (1992, 417). Also Acyutakṛṣṇa, in his commentary to the *SLS* (Dīkṣita and Tīrtha 1973, 4), Madhusūdana Sarasvatī in his *Siddhānta-bindu* (Sarasvatī et al. 1928, 6), and Murti (1983, 70).

never truly connected with the self. ... His interest in metaphysics and logic is always subordinated to the center of his attention” (1953, 72).⁶²⁹ There is a long-standing precedent for Nīścaldās’s focus on soteriological efficacy.

But if the chapters 5-9 reviewing Nīścaldās’s thought as presented in the *VP* have shown anything, they demonstrate that this focus on spiritual liberation does not mean that the thinking of the various teachers in the Advaita lineage was unsystematic and imprecise or that it was primarily speculative, mystical, and theological. If anything, the many teachers whose works we have seen Nīścaldās engage, as well as Nīścaldās’s own views, are every bit as rigorous, systematic, and occasionally even pedantic as the best of Western philosophy.⁶³⁰ “They were writing for intelligent and critically minded readers and not pleading for the silence of mystic communion.” Rather, “[they] wished to comprehend rationally what they apparently experienced through mystical insight. Or, ... they were driven to their mystical conclusion by the force of their logic” (Matilal 1977a, 6, 25). Nonetheless, these Advaitins never lost sight of the forest, i.e., liberation, for the sake of the philosophical trees. Gaurinath Sastri, in his foreword to Nṛsiṃhāśrama’s *Advaita-dīpikā*, suggests that the methods used by the proponents of Vedānta to lead one to the knowledge of Brahman “retain no value in and by themselves” (Nṛsiṃhāśrama, Nārāyaṇāśrama, and Subrahmanya Sastri 1982, 2). Sastri then cites Bhartṛhari: “Only ignorance [i.e., the unreal] is described by the different methods of the *śāstra*,”⁶³¹ and also Śrīharṣa: “The capability [*ājñā* = *sāmarthyā*] of the arguments [used] in fulfilling one’s desire [namely, establishing the Vedānta doctrine] is not even refutable [by me], just like a king’s command [which opposes the enemy forces] is not disobeyed [by his own forces]; thus why not use them [the very same arguments] even against Vedāntic means as you [the opponent] wish?”⁶³² The

⁶²⁹ Also Mayeda: “Śaṅkara is primarily concerned not with the establishment of any epistemologically or philosophically perfect system but the salvation of people suffering from transmigratory existence here in the present world” (Śaṅkarācārya 2006, 2:43).

⁶³⁰ Matilal articulates the Western misperception of “Indian philosophy” as “a group off occult religious cults, a system of dogmas, and an odd assortment of spirituality, mysticism, and imprecise thinking, concerned almost exclusively with ‘spiritual liberation’” (1971, 10).

⁶³¹ Sastri only cites the first half of verse, in Sanskrit. The full verse reads: “*śāstreṣu prakriyā-bhedair avidyaivopavarṇyate; anāgama-vikalpā tu svayaṃ vidyopavartate*. Only ignorance [i.e., the unreal] is described by the different methods of the *śāstra*. But knowledge [of the Real] itself remains unaffected by [these] differences. *Vākyapadīya* 2.233” (Pillai 1971, 90). While citing Bhartṛhari on means and methods, we can also add *Vākyapadīya* 2.38: “*upādāyāpi ye heyās tām upāyān pracakṣate; upāyānām ca niyamo nāvaśyam avatiṣṭhate*. Even the means which are required are to be abandoned. The means do not remain required.” This is stated in the context of grammatical analysis (45).

⁶³² *Khaṇḍana-khaṇḍa-khāḍya* v. 27: *abhīṣṭasiddhāv api khaṇḍanānām akhaṇḍi rājñām iva naivam ājñā; tat tāni kasmān na yathābhilāṣaṃ saiddhāntike ’pi adhvaṇi yojayadhvam*. Once again Sastri only cites the verse in Sanskrit and paraphrases its sense, but, due to the terse nature of the verse, I have made use of several commentaries to help determine the meaning (Śrīharṣa et al. 1914, 228-9; 1917, 139; 1962 (2019 V.S), 82-3; Jha 1986, 79). Granoff provides an alternate translation: “And the use of

same methods and arguments can be used for or against one's own system, particularly in Śrīharṣa's style of dialectics termed *vitaṇḍa*, where the opponent's thesis is refuted without offering an alternative thesis. Nonetheless, Brahman, the ground of all being, is unaffected by such disputation.

To stress the emphasis on the final goal, Sureśvara's couplet is also cited by Acyutakṛṣṇa in his *Kṛṣṇālaṅkāra* commentary to the *SLS*, while explaining an opening verse where Appayya Dīkṣita explains his motive for composing the (*SLS*) text: "The ancient teachers, intent⁶³³ on establishing the identity of the self as the highest, described [this identity] in different and contradictory ways, because they disregarded the matters based in the empirical sphere. I compile here the sources of these many differences in the correct view (*siddhānta*) that were explained by my venerable father, for clarifying my mind."⁶³⁴ Acyutakṛṣṇa provides yet another statement by Appayya to explain this verse, this time from Appayya's *Parimala* sub-commentary⁶³⁵ to the *BS ŚBh*: "It is not a contradiction to conceive of imaginary entities as a means to understand a real object. For example, in order to point out the real [but hard to see] Arundhatī star,⁶³⁶ the stars to the East, North, etc., conceived of by different people as "the bigger Arundhatī" do not contradict the real star."⁶³⁷ Essentially, what matters is that one arrives at the knowledge of one's self as Brahman, even if the means is flawed, imperfect, or imagined.

Nīścaldās himself uses similar arguments when concluding his treatment of *anirvacanīya-khyāti*. "The difference between non-*ātmā* objects as real and unreal has been stated only for the sake of facilitating entry into the knowledge of Advaita for those seekers whose intellect is dull (*sthūla*), analogous to the *arundhatī-nyāya*.⁶³⁸ If one whose intellect is dull is told the correct doctrine (*siddhānta*) right at the outset, then that person, who holds that non-*ātmā* objects are real, on hearing the marvelous meaning of the doctrine might become averse to the *śāstra* and

refuting principles even in proving one's desired aim is not banned by any law like the law of kings. Thus, why cannot you employ them at will, even on the path of your very own doctrines" (1978, 202)?

⁶³³ Here I take *sannahyadbhiḥ* as *tātparyavadbhiḥ* following Acyutakṛṣṇa, and in apposition with *ācāryaiḥ*.

⁶³⁴ *SLS* 1.2: *prācīnācaryair vyavahāra-siddha-viśayeṣv ātmaikya-siddhau paraṁ sannahyadbhir anādarāt saraṇayo nānāvidhā darśitāḥ; tan mūlān iha saṁgrahena katicit siddhānta-bhedān dhiyaś-śuddhayai saṅkalayāmi tāta-caraṇa-vyākhyā-vacaḥ khyāpītān* (Dīkṣita and Tīrtha 1973, 4).

⁶³⁵ The *Parimala* is Appayya's commentary on the *Kalpataru*, which itself is a commentary by Amalānanda on Vācaspati's *Bhāmātī* on the *BS ŚBh*.

⁶³⁶ See n. 440, p. 215.

⁶³⁷ *Parimala* on *BS* 1.4.15: *akalpita-vastu-pratipatty-upāyatayā kalpyamāneṣu padārtheṣu virodho na doṣāvahaḥ, yathā tāttvikārundhatī-pratipatty-upāyatayā nānā-puruṣaiḥ kalpyamānāsu tat-prācyodīcy-ādi-nakṣatra-rūpāsu sthūlārundhatīṣu virodho na doṣāvahaḥ* (Śaṅkarācārya and Sastri 1938, 403).

⁶³⁸ See n. 440, p. 215.

might stray from the pursuit of liberation (*puruṣārtha*). Therefore, non-*ātmā* objects are said to have two-fold reality, empirical and illusory, while consciousness has ultimate reality. Then when the lesser reality of the created world (*prapañca*) relative to consciousness has been established in one's intellect from the example of the dream and from the negative sentences of Vedānta, one can know all non-*ātmā* objects to be illusory and bereft of reality and manifestation (*sattā-sphūrti*)” (*VP* 7.55, 288-9).

Such an explanation of a gradation of teaching methods adapted to the student's level and ability is common to Indian thought since the early times, as, for example, in the “progressive teachings” of the *BhG* gradually leading the devotee to the highest revelation (Minor 1980, 340) and in the *upāya-kauśalya*, “skillful means” of Mahāyāna Buddhism (Williams 1989, 142-51). Even Śaṅkara “emphasizes repeatedly that the Veda itself adjusts its teachings to different levels of understanding and qualification, that it uses different methods of instruction and that it addresses different interests and capabilities. ... also within the “knowledge section” (*jñāna-kāṇḍa*), that is, the Upaniṣads, it speaks at different levels. It offers various meditational and devotional methods and “symbolic” devices (*pratīka*), such as the om, to those who are of slow or mediocre understanding (*mandamadhyamaprattipattiṃ prati*” (Halbfass 1991, 57). Nīścaldās himself describes the conventional view, *sr̥ṣṭi-dr̥ṣṭi-vāda* – as holding that creation occurs first and then subsequently, by relation with a means of cognition (*pramāṇa*), perception takes place, and that non-*ātmā* objects have an empirical reality even when uncognized – as the perspective of “persons of unrefined vision (*sthūla-darśī*).” However, after study of Vedānta, both empirical and illusory objects of perception are seen to be *anirvacanīya* and not really existent since their substratum is cognized as pure consciousness, Brahman. Thus, since the empirical reality is then also seen as ultimately unreal, and the seeker is led to the end goal, Nīścaldās holds that this view does “no damage (*hāni*) to non-duality, Advaita” (*VP* 8.77, 394). Implicit in this statement, however, is the fact that Nīścaldās considers the theory of *dr̥ṣṭi-sr̥ṣṭi*, that perception is creation, to be superior, as will be discussed in section 10.9. Nevertheless, Nīścaldās consistently reminds his reader that the empirical is also to be subsumed under the illusory upon Brahman-realization.

A modern scholar is more outspoken regarding the doctrinal diversity: “All the [teachers] agreed in the ultimate unity of the soul, and with the unreality of the phenomenal world. For the world of fiction, different explanations are given, according to the ingenuity of each [teacher]. What if different explanations are given for a mere fiction (Ramesan 1972, 92)!”

10.9 Nīscaldās and *Dr̥ṣṭi-sṛṣṭi-vāda*

In chapter 8, we saw Nīscaldās describe *dr̥ṣṭi-sṛṣṭi-vāda* (DSV), the theory that perception is creation, in the context of his discussion of the nature of reality and illusoriness. His treatment of this doctrine where either perception itself is creation, or creation occurs concurrent with perception, is rather understated; he simply mentions that DSV is accepted by all Advaita *śāstras* (*VP* 8.76, 394). This theory is also referred to as *eka-jīva-vāda*, the theory that there is only one *jīva*. DSV appears to be a form of metaphysical solipsism, which holds that the self is the only existing reality and that all other reality, including the external world and other persons, have no independent existence but are representations of the consciousness of that self. However, the difference between DSV and solipsism is that within DSV neither the “self” nor the other dependent “realities” are empirically real; the “self” is consciousness, the non-dual substratum of everything perceived as though real, separate and independent, and there is nothing other than consciousness, i.e., Brahman. Compared to this understated and implicit acceptance of the DSV in the *VP*, Nīscaldās is more emphatic in the *VS*, where he states that that DSV is the correct view (*siddhānta*) of Vedānta. In essence, consciousness is ever-liberated. Bondage, liberation, the Vedas, and gurus are not accepted as really existent. The transformations of ignorance apparently manifest in consciousness in various forms, but there is no harm whatsoever to *ātmā*, which is ever unattached, unchanged (*ekarasa*). No one has become liberated in the past, and no one will be liberated in the future; instead, consciousness is ever-free. Ignorance and its transformations never have any relation to consciousness; therefore, the perception of bondage, Vedas, gurus, *śravaṇa* and the rest, *samādhi*, and even liberation are also born of ignorance, like a dream, and hence are false. The persistence of such notions for so long is also born of ignorance (*VS* 6.329, 203).

Some scholars hold that DSV is the “perfection of Advaita philosophy” (Ganguli 1988, 98). Vidyāranya considered *dr̥ṣṭi-sṛṣṭi* to be the fast (*avilambita*) and direct (*haṭhāt*) path to knowledge of the self, likening it to a secret back-door granting direct access to the inner sanctum of the king. By contrast, study of the “*tat tvam asi*” *mahā-vākya* is like attempting to gain an audience with the king through the main palace entrance; it is also possible to gain knowledge by this means, but there are more obstacles and it takes a lot longer.⁶³⁹ Nīscaldās

⁶³⁹ *Anubhūti-prakāśa* 9.46cd-51ab: *prauḍhasya rāja-gehasya dvāraṃ syāt purato mahat* (9.46). The entrance to the grand palace will be large and in front. *pr̥ṣṭhato 'ntahpura-dvāraṃ cora-dvārākhyam alpakam*; The entrance to the inner sanctum is small and

himself implies the same when he mentions that the difference between non-*ātmā* objects, as either real or illusory, is merely for the sake of facilitating entry into the knowledge of Advaita for those seekers whose intellect is dull and who, if instructed in the DSV doctrine at the outset, might become averse to the scriptures (*śāstra*) and stray from the goal of liberation (*puruṣārtha*) (section 6.3.4, p. 188). Nīścaldās also states that such people, who hold that *saṃsāra* and bondage are real and that human effort is needed to attain liberation, would lose the hope of liberation if told that, according to DSV, nobody ever has become liberated. Therefore, as a kindness to such people, the *śruti-smṛti* statements propounding the liberation of Śuka, Vāmadeva and others have not been termed subsidiary statements of praise (*artha-vāda*) but are instead considered to be injunctions (*vidhi*) for the pursuit of liberation, in other words, a teaching better suited their lower capabilities.⁶⁴⁰

DSV certainly is non-dualism taken to its limits, and the evidence that Nīścaldās accepts it provides some insight on his choice to write in the vernacular. Nīścaldās holds that one ought to perform good actions until the strong desire for knowledge arises, and then undertake the practice of continual *śravaṇa*, etc., to attain the knowledge of Brahman (section 8.5, p. 302). If, as per DSV, the empirical world is as though a dream and there are no Vedas or gurus, it is of no consequence whether one writes in Sanskrit or the vernacular, as such conventions are not real either. Facilitating access of greater numbers of persons to the teachings of Advaita that lead to liberation could be considered good karma, even though these other persons are merely conceptions of one's own consciousness. Moreover, Nīścaldās, if enlightened, would no longer be required to do anything. But the act of writing vernacular texts to facilitate the knowledge of Brahman could be considered one of the Divine Properties (*daivī-sampadā*) that enlightened persons possess (see section 8.5.1, n. 572, p. 304), specifically, an expression of compassion

to the rear, and is called the thief's door. *mahā-dvāreṇa sahasā durlabhaṃ rāja-darśanam* (47). *jana-sammarda-bāhulyād dvārāṇāṃ ca bahutvataḥ*; An immediate audience with the king via the grand entrance is hard to obtain, due to crush of the crowd, and the multiplicity of gates. *alpa-dvāre svāmi-bhaktō haṭhād rājānam iṅgate* (48). *drṣṭi-sṛṣṭyānubhūty-arthī vetty ātmānam tathā haṭhāt*; [Whereas] the devotee of the king sees the king directly via the small entrance. Similarly, the one who seeks direct knowledge inevitably/directly knows the self by means of [the doctrine of] *drṣṭi-sṛṣṭi*. *mahā-sṛṣṭyā tat-padārtham ādau jñātvā tathā punaḥ* (49). *tvam-padārtham śodhayitvā vākyād bodho vilambate*. After first understanding the meaning of the word "that (*tat*)" by means of the cosmic creation, then having clarified [one's understanding of] the meaning of the word "you (*tvam*)," [self-]realization through the [*tat tvam asi*] *mahā-vākya* takes a long time [to achieve]. *tasmād ihājāta-śatrur bālāker avilambitah* (50). *pratyag-brahmatva-bodhārtham drṣṭi-sṛṣṭim avocata* (51ab). Therefore, [King] Ajātaśatru spoke of [the doctrine of] *drṣṭi-sṛṣṭi* to [the brahman] Bālāki here [in the *Kauśītaki Upaniṣad*], in order to immediately bring about [Bālāki's] realization of Brahman as [his] inner-self (Vidyāraṇya 1983, 62).

⁶⁴⁰ For Ramana Maharshi's perspective on DSV and its place in his method of what I earlier called the "gradation of teaching methods adapted to the student's level ability (p. 392)," see Arvind Sharma (2003, 53-5).

towards all beings (*bhūteṣu dayā*), or simply the karma one must do to exhaust one's *prārabdha karma*. Acceptance of DSV would certainly also explain Niścaldās's lack of interest in socio-political engagement, as that too would be seen as not real or of consequence to liberation, akin to the image of fire projected on a screen lacking any ability to burn anything.

10.10 Reason versus Revelation

The argument that Niścaldās was influenced to write in the vernacular by his acceptance of DSV may seem extreme. Even without taking DSV into account, there is yet another explanation for Niścaldās's action, which is also sanctioned by his Vedānta views. Despite Niścaldās's seemingly radical break with tradition in writing about Advaita in the vernacular, on the whole, he appears to be quite conservative and tradition-bound. In this section, a few notable examples are provided of Niścaldās's position on the use of reason versus *śruti*, revelation, which reveal an interesting insight into his understanding of "revelation."

What is the role of reason in understanding Brahman via *śruti*? In refuting the Sāṅkhya argument based on logic, namely, that Brahman cannot be the cause of the creation because Brahman is different from it, the *BS* points out that the same defect exists in the Sāṅkhya position too "because reasoning is groundless. If you say it is to be proven by another way [to avoid the defect], even then you cannot escape [the defect]. *tarkāpratiṣṭhānād api, anyathā 'numeyam iticed, evam api avimokṣa-prasaṅgaḥ*" *BS* 2.1.11). Commenting on this *sūtra*, Śaṅkara states, "and hence the meaning of scripture (*āgama*) is not to be opposed by mere reason, because reason is based, not on scripture but on mere human fancy, and fancy is uncontrollable."⁶⁴¹ The word translated as "reason" here is *tarka*, which more precisely means contra-factual argument, and one must recall that Niścaldās included *tarka* under erroneous cognition (*VP* 7.84, 342-3; section 7.2, p. 233). In the process of refuting the Nyāya *anyathā-khyāti* and defending *anirvacanīya-khyāti* (section 6.3.5.6, p. 206), Niścaldās cautions that it is inappropriate for an orthodox person (*āstika*) to twist the meaning stated in the Vedas by means of humanly-conceived tools of logic (*yukti-samudāya*). Thus, for Śaṅkara and also Niścaldās, when it comes to understanding scripture, particularly for the purpose of knowing Brahman, reason is not to be trusted. Both of them use reason when it is appropriate; in fact, in *BS ŚBh* 2.1.11, we see Śaṅkara using reason to

⁶⁴¹ *itaś ca nāgamyē'rthe kevalena tarkena pratyavasthātavyam. yasmān nirāgamāḥ puruṣotprekṣā-mātra-nibandhanās tarkā apratiṣṭhitā bhavanti, utprekṣyā nirāṅkuṣatvāt* (Śaṅkarācārya and Sastri 1938, 448).

argue for the inapplicability of reason in knowing scripture. Reason has its uses; it helps in understanding, correcting, and systematizing thought, but it cannot provide the knowledge of Brahman. The use of reason in Vedānta is “primarily a negative one, meant to refute or neutralize opposing doctrines” (Halbfass 1988a, 280). As we have seen, only verbal testimony (*śabda pramāṇa*) comprising scripture and the testimony of enlightened teachers is accepted by Vedānta as the means of knowledge for Brahman.⁶⁴² Elsewhere, in the context of the Veda adjusting its teachings to suit the different levels of the students’ qualifications, Halbfass suggests that “Śāṅkara is obviously convinced that such variability and didactic adjustment is legitimate and effective insofar only as it is ... rooted in revelation” (1991, 57; emphasis mine).

When describing the diverse views on the relation between *jīva* and *Īśvara*, Nīścaldās states that the intent (*tātparya*) of these different methods (*prakriyā*) and all the texts of Advaita is that only listening (*śravaṇa*) to Vedānta texts can provide the result of becoming free from suffering. Such Vedānta texts provide the means of the knowledge of the nature of the ever-liberated *ātmā* and the attainment of happiness and free one from the endless kinds of afflictions produced by an attitude of agency. Aside from this, listening to Vedānta can never result in the destruction of bondage for *ātmā* or the attainment of liberation in the form of ultimate happiness since, even before listening to Vedānta, the *ātmā* is ever-liberated and does not have the affliction of bondage. Nevertheless, since the endless, false bondage is erroneously apprehended, one engages in listening to Vedānta only due to delusion; one who is not deluded will not engage in such activity.

Towards the end of the *VP*, Nīścaldās presents three different unattributed views on the final question pertaining to *vṛttis*, namely its use. These views differ concerning their conception of the *jīva*, ignorance, and the relation with objects. Nīścaldās considers the point of primary difference is whether the *jīva*’s *upādhi* is pervasive or delimited, and he suggests that this distinction is solely for the purpose of revealing the cleverness of one’s intellect (*buddhi-pravīṇatā-khyāpana*). However, since all views depend on a *vṛtti* to effect a relation of the cognizer with the object, these views instead only demonstrate the lack of cleverness. It is as though Nīścaldās is chiding his unnamed proponents for losing sight of the bigger picture in the midst of their intellectual wrangling and is cautioning the reader to avoid the same pitfall; instead

⁶⁴² See also, Murti (1983).

the reader must remain aware that the ultimate purpose of a *vr̥tti* is to effect a relation with Brahman; he thus pulls the rug out from under all the intellectual constructs. As if to underscore the point, Nīścaldās states within two pages that *saṃsāra*, comprising the waking, dream, and deep sleep states caused by the *vr̥ttis* (which themselves are modifications of ignorance), is nothing but bondage, and the *vr̥tti* brought about by the *mahā-vākya*, “I am Brahman,” brings about the end to ignorance and the worldly creation (*prapañca*), i.e., liberation.

Let us look at a few examples of how Nīścaldās uses scripture to make his arguments. When arguing for the incorrectness of the view that considers Īśvara to be the sheath of happiness (*ānandamaya-kośa*), he writes that all authors have accepted the five sheaths (*kośa*), including Vidyāraṇya himself in his *Pañcakośa-viveka* (*PD* 3), and, since the works of these authors cannot possibly be wrong, Īśvara-ness does not reside in the sheath of happiness (*VP* 8.17, 353; section 7.4.1, p. 244). In his *VS*, Nīścaldās declares Vidyāraṇya’s Theory of Appearance (*ābhāsa-vāda*) to be superior to the Theory of Delimitation and, to strengthen his claim, mentions that Śaṅkara also accepted the Theory of Appearance (*VS* 4.203, 113; 6.442, 275; section 7.4.5, p. 257). In the course of refuting secondary ignorance as the material cause of reference-superimposition, Nīścaldās makes sure that “the enlightened words (*sarvajña-vacana*) [of] *Pañcapādikā*” are not opposed.⁶⁴³ In his subsequent refutation of an objection, Nīścaldās accepts as incontrovertible the *Pañcapādikā* statement referenced in the argument and proceeds to show that it has been misunderstood by the objector (section 8.1.5, p. 272ff). Nīścaldās even extends the property of omniscience (*sarvajñatā*) to the authors of other philosophical systems such as Akṣapāda Gotama of the *Nyāya-sūtra*, Kaṇāda of the *Vaiśeṣika-sūtra*, and Kapila of the *Sāṅkhya-sūtra* (*VP* 7.63, 307; section 6.3.5.5, p. 204).

Nīścaldās argues in favor of the utility of performing *śravaṇa*, etc., even if one is not in the *sannyāsa-āśrama*, the life-stage of renunciation, on the grounds that, eventually, the practice will lead the seeker to renunciation. To support his argument, Nīścaldās quotes statements attributed to Gauḍapāda, the *YogVā*, and Vidyāraṇya’s *PD*, alongside *śruti* (section 8.5, p. 302ff), and thus indicates that he considers these works to be scripture as well. Similarly, when refuting the *Nyāya-makaranda* view that the cessation of the conceived is different from the substratum,

⁶⁴³ Nīścaldās precedes this statement with an explanation that “the teacher Padmapāda wrote the commentary (*ṭīkā*) called *Pañcapādikā* to the [Śaṅkara-]bhāṣya on the *Brahma-sūtra*, and he attained enlightenment [lit. omniscience] through the teachings [lit. words] of Śaṅkara. *śārīraka-bhāṣya kī ṭīkā pañcapādikā nāma padmapādācārya naiṃ kiya hai, tākūṃ bhāṣyakāra ke vacana taiṃ sarvajñatā hū hai*” (*VP* 8.53, 378).

Nīścaldās argues that the *Nyāya-makaranda* view contradicts the statements of *BS bhāṣyakāra* Śaṅkara, effectively elevating Śaṅkara's works to the status of scripture too (section 9.3.2, p. 341). This is not surprising since Nīścaldās considers Śaṅkara to be a knower of Brahman, i.e., enlightened.⁶⁴⁴

In support of the substratum of dreams as consciousness located within the body, Nīścaldās states that to consider the substratum being located elsewhere would oppose the words of Gauḍapāda, in the *vaitathya-prakarana* of the *Māṇḍūkya-kārikā* (*MāKā* 2.1-3), and of Śaṅkara's commentary to the same. (section 8.2.1, p. 282ff). Also in connection with dreams, Nīścaldās raises a potential shortcoming in Sarvajñātman's *Samkṣepa-śārīraka* statement on the self-immediacy of dream-superimpositions, and, in his remedy to this shortcoming, invokes the view of "the honorable Prakāśātman" (Prakāśātma-śrīcaraṇa)⁶⁴⁵ that objects in a dream-superimposition are illumined without a *vṛtti* due to their constant relation with the *jīva*-consciousness that is their substratum. The added reverence for Prakāśātman is certainly puzzling because when Nīścaldās is apparently reverential to Prakāśātman elsewhere,⁶⁴⁶ he is actually critical of Prakāśātman's position. Nevertheless, it draws the reader's attention yet again to Nīścaldās's high regard for the works of Prakāśātman and also of Sarvajñātman.

Despite holding that all human beings are eligible for attaining liberation through the knowledge of Brahman, Nīścaldās suggests that, in the case of those outside the "twice-born" castes, the means of attaining this knowledge are the traditionally tolerated ones: namely, listening to the *purāṇas* and *itihāsa* for *śūdras*, and listening to vernacular commentaries for the lowest caste. It appears as if the possibility that *śūdras* and lower castes might want and be able to study these texts on their own cannot itself be mentioned, to say nothing of their study of *śruti* and *smṛti*. However, he is not as conservative on this issue as it may appear at first glance. When discussing the utility of action for gaining knowledge, Nīścaldās does note that Amalānanda (1247-1347 CE), the author of the *Kalpataru*, a commentary on Vācaspati Miśra's *Bhāmātī*, argued that even those outside the traditional *āśrama* system, such as the non-brahman carter, Raikva, and Gārgī, a woman, are considered by *śruti* to have knowledge of Brahman. Therefore,

⁶⁴⁴ See preceding note (n. 643).

⁶⁴⁵ See n. 536, p. 273.

⁶⁴⁶ This is not an isolated instance. In *VP* 3.18, 81, too, Nīścaldās refers to Prakāśātma-śrīcaraṇa as the author of the *Vivaraṇa*, in the context of the four accessories to verbal cognition (*śabda pramā*), namely: 1) expectancy (*ākāṅkṣā*); 2) compatibility (*yogyatā*); 3) intention (*tātparya*); and, 4) proximity (*āsatti*). There, he is actually critical of Prakāśātman's (and Nāgojī Bhaṭṭa's) view that intention is never the cause of verbal cognition.

all good actions, not just those prescribed by one's *āśrama*, are useful for knowledge as long as they are *nitya-karmas*, obligatory actions. However, on the basis of Sarvajñātman's *ŚŚ*, and the *Mahānārāyaṇopaniṣad*, Nīścaldās broadens the scope such that "all good actions, performed by anyone, even those outside the three highest castes, and women too, are useful for attaining the knowledge of Brahman" since these good action eliminate the *pāpas* that impede the attainment of knowledge (section 8.4, p. 302ff).

By now it should be evident that Nīścaldās has a reverential attitude towards many Vedānta texts, verging on considering them inviolate, but the Advaita tradition (*sampradāya*) and teacher (*guru*) are also important. According to *TS* 59, the definition for verbal testimony as a means of cognition (*śabda pramāṇa*) is "*āpta-vākyaṃ*, the statement of a credible or authoritative person" (Annambhaṭṭa and Govardhanamisra 1963, 50); the teachings of a teacher, as well as works authored by realized persons within the tradition, satisfy this definition. Thus, in the process of correcting the misunderstanding that the sheath consisting of happiness (the *ānandamaya-kośa*) includes Īśvara (in chapter 7), Nīścaldās suggests that this misunderstanding of the *MāU* and Vidyāraṇya's *PD* stems from the study of Vedānta texts without the benefit of a teacher and the tradition. When Nīścaldās concludes that all humans are eligible for knowledge and devotion, his explanation asserts that even those of the lowest caste can develop a desire to know due to the impressions (*saṃskāra*) of prior births, and then, through human statements (*pauruṣeya vacana*) as opposed to the divinely revealed Vedas, *śruti*, they can gain knowledge of Brahman and become liberated by the cessation of ignorance and its effects. Nīścaldās states that the conclusion (*nirdhāra*) of all *śāstras*, not just *śruti*, is that all humans are eligible for devotion to God and Brahman-realization (*VP* 8.111, 413; section 8.5.1, p. 304ff). Thus, we see that the scope of what constitutes scripture for Nīścaldās is broadened to include not just *smṛti*, or humanly conceived texts that include the *itihāsa* and *purāṇa* texts, but also the texts created by wise persons (*vidvān*) who have direct, experiential knowledge of Brahman (*VP* 8.167, 441; section 9.3.2, p. 341). Also, in *VS* v. 3.10, he states that "a knower of Brahman is Brahman incarnate, and his speech is the Veda,"⁶⁴⁷ effectively elevating such texts to the level of *śruti*. Further, according to Nīścaldās, all Vedānta statements explain Brahman (*VP* 3.16, 78; section 5.4.3, p. 133). Essentially, anything that falls under verbal testimony as a means of cognition of

⁶⁴⁷ *brahmarūpa ahi brahmavita, tākī vāṇī veda*. See section 4.1, p. 92 for full verse.

Brahman can be considered as scripture. Given such a broad stance on “revelation,” the question of whether a text is composed in Sanskrit or the vernacular fades into irrelevance. An author with personal, direct, and firm knowledge of Brahman is qualified to write a text for the benefit of humanity, and, given that not everyone can understand Sanskrit, it is a natural and compassionate act to write in the vernacular, which permits the non-Sanskrit knowing populace a chance to realize Brahman.

10.10.1 Some Puzzling Exclusions

Despite Nīscaldās’s broad acceptance of traditional Advaita literature as revelation and the great familiarity he displays with this corpus (See Appendix, p. 409), there are at least two notable omissions: Appayya Dīkṣita (1520-1593), and Madhusūdana Sarasvatī (ca. 1570).

Appayya Dīkṣita flourished ca. 1585 in present day Andhra Pradesh, and two of his most important works are the *Siddhānta-leśa-saṅgraha* (*SLS*), an independent survey of the variety of doctrinal interpretations and arguments in post-Śaṅkara Advaita, and the *Parimala*, a sub-commentary on Vācaspati Miśra’s *Bhāmatī* (Dīkṣita and Tīrtha 1973, xi; Minkowski 2011, 207-8). It is almost certain that Nīscaldās was familiar with the *SLS*, since two of the views he presents and refutes are of the relatively obscure Vedāntins, KCNB and Advaita-vidyācārya, whose views are known only through references in the *SLS*. There also seem to be several parallels to the *SLS* arguments in Nīscaldās’s work. For example, in his discussion of DSV, the example of Karṇa seems to follow the *SLS* closely (see section 7.4.4, particularly n. 490, p. 241). Nīscaldās’s description of the two types of DSV (*VP* 8.76, 393-4; section 8.3.1, p. 288) also appear to follow the *SLS* (Joshi 2010, 35). Nīscaldās’s arguments on the instrumentality of *śabda* in providing immediate knowledge of Brahman also seem parallel to those of the *SLS*, chapter 3 (Dīkṣita, Tīrtha, and Śāstrī 1890, 96-7) but are not exactly the same (*VP* 8.124-6, 418-20; section 9.1.2-3, p. 317ff).

Madhusūdana Sarasvatī flourished in Benares ca. 1570. One of his important works, the *Advaita-siddhi*, is a response to the Madhva follower Vyasatīrtha’s *Nyāyāmṛta*, a polemical work against non-dualism. “The *Advaita-siddhi* was a governing text for Advaita for the next two centuries, attracting many commentaries as well as replies from the dualists, which were in turn answered by Madhusudana’s pupils and later defenders” (Minkowski 2011, 210). Madhusūdana also wrote the *Siddhānta-bindu*, a commentary on Śaṅkara’s *Daśa-ślokī*, and the *Vedanta-*

kalpalatika, a refutation of non-Vedānta schools of thought and also an explanation of the nature of liberation (Sarasvatī 1962, xiv-xv). Madhusūdana was also a leading defender of DSV, particularly in his *Advaita-siddhi*. However, I have as yet not been able to detect any parallels between Nīścaldās's work and that of Madhusūdana.

Several possible explanations can be offered for Nīścaldās's failure to mention Appayya and Madhusūdana explicitly. For example, he may have had no disagreements with their standpoints, or perhaps he felt either that they offered no novel interpretations or that their views did not contribute to the understanding of Brahman beyond what was already stated in the *VP*. Further, in the case of Madhusūdana's *Advaita-siddhi*, the polemics against the followers of Madhva and duality that occur in this text do not really have a place in Nīścaldās's overall scheme for the *VP*.

10.11 Philosophy versus Theology

All along, and particularly in section 4.2, p. **Error! Bookmark not defined.**ff, I have argued that the *VP* and *VS* are philosophical texts on Vedānta. But, according to Vedānta, the Vedas are not eternal, because revealed scripture (*śruti*) itself has described its creation, for example, in the *puruṣa-sūkta*, Hymn to the Cosmic Person, *RV* 10.90.9. Only consciousness (*cetana*) is eternal, everything else, including the Vedas, is not. Verbal cognition (*śabda pramāṇa*), the only means for the direct realization of Brahman, requires an intent (*tātparya*) on the part of the one creating the words. Nīścaldās considers the Vedas and the *Mahābhārata*, etc., to be humanly authored. [But we must understand that these are extra-ordinary humans; otherwise, this would contradict Nīścaldās's statement elsewhere that the statements of *śruti* are not human-originated (*apauruṣeya*) (*VP* 8.83, 398; section 8.3.2, p. 292)]. The Vedas are effortlessly created by Īśvara via a mere intention (*saṃkalpa*) at the beginning of creation; Īśvara recalls the Vedas and reproduces them faithfully from creation to creation. On the other hand, Vyāsa (the author of the *Mahābhārata*) and others who are omniscient create their *smṛti* works according to their desire in each creation, and these created works are not necessarily identical to those of a prior creation. The Vedas, being a creation of Īśvara, thus have an intent, which is reproduced faithfully and eternally from creation to creation, and this intent is the knowledge of Brahman (*VP* 3.20, 91-2; section 5.4.3, p. 138ff).

Nīścaldās also holds that the conclusion of all scripture (*śāstra*) is that all humans are eligible for devotion to God, i.e., Īśvara or Brahman with attributes (*saguṇa* Brahman), and can thereby

attain Brahman-realization (*VP* 8.111, 413; section 8.5.1, p. 305). The contemplation (*upāsanā*) of *saguṇa* Brahman will help the practitioner become a middling aspirant (*madhyama adhikārī*) (*VS* 5.303, 182-3), and, for this middling aspirant, the contemplation of the self as attribute-less (*nirguṇa*) Brahman (*ahaṃ-graha upāsanā*) is a means of Brahman-realization. For the best aspirant (*uttama adhikārī*), *śravaṇa* (listening to scriptures), *manana* (reflection on the content of these texts), and *nididhyāsana*, (profound and continuous meditation on the same), alone are the means (*sādhana*).

The Hindu cosmology of an indefinitely repeating cycle of the creation, sustenance, and destruction of the universe itself is based upon Purāṇic scriptures, and we have seen, in section 10.10, that scripture, for Nīścaldās, is essentially anything that comes under the means of cognition (*śabda pramāṇa*) of Brahman: namely, *śruti*, *smṛti*, and the works and utterances of those who have a direct knowledge of Brahman. Also, the overview of the *VP* in section 10.5 showed his sustained and primary focus on soteriology, namely, liberation through the direct knowledge of Brahman. In light of this, is Nīścaldās a philosopher or a theologian? Edelmann differentiates the two as follows:

Philosophy engages argument, reason, and logical analysis, without assuming in the process of argumentation the authority of a particular religious or a revealed text, even though the philosopher may believe in the authority of a sacred text, and may even seek to establish its truth through rational argumentation. *Theology*, however, presupposes the value in providing a rational interpretation and explication of a sacred text as a self-sufficient means of understanding the truth. For theology, it is a legitimate form of argumentation to use scripture and tradition as a premise in an argument (2013, 429-30).

Given what we have seen about Nīścaldās's attitude towards Advaita texts, particularly in section 10.10 above and the Advaita position that Brahman is the only truth, he (and Advaita) is clearly on the theological side. He makes use of philosophical methods to refute non-Advaita positions, to compare competing Advaita standpoints, to evaluate the validity of a given view, and even to provide robust definitions that can help one's understanding. But the entire exercise is ultimately subordinate to the teachings of the wise in the tradition, namely, those who have direct knowledge of Brahman and have recorded their understanding in their works. And these Advaita works and tradition too are ultimately subordinate to the only means of cognition that can provide immediate knowledge of Brahman, namely the *mahā-vākyas* of the Upaniṣads, accompanied by *śravaṇa*, *manana*, and *nididhyāsana*. Philosophy is, in fact, an integral part of this process. Śaṅkara defines *manana* as "reflecting [on that which has been heard] by means of

reasoning. *paścāt mantavyas tarkataḥ*” (1986, 193), and Sadānanda, as “the incessant reflection on the non-dual essence [i.e., Brahman] that has been heard [from the teacher] by means of proofs that are in accordance with Vedānta. *mananaṃ tu śrutasyādvitīya-vastuno vedāntānugūṇa-yuktibhir anavaratam anucintanam. Vedānta-sāra* 191” (1974, 108). Clooney even makes the case that Advaita *manana* is “theological reasoning” (2003, 47-9). But it all starts with *śravaṇa*, listening to scripture, as expounded by a teacher who is grounded in the Vedānta tradition.

Thus, it should be clear that the Advaita standpoint on scripture is not a literal, dogmatic position that entails the surrender of reason to faith. Śaṅkara himself, in his commentary following *BU* 4.5.15, which discusses Yājñavalkya renunciation of his household after his dialogue with his wife Maitreyī on the means of immortality, points out that “scripture (*śruti-smṛti*) contains hundreds of contradictory passages as to whether renunciation is prescribed, and if so, when it is to be undertaken. Tradition is also similarly contradictory. Even learned scholars who expound the meaning of the scriptures (*śāstrārtha*) differ in their opinions. Thus, it is not possible for persons of weak intellect (*manda-buddhi*) to arrive at the meaning of the scriptures by means of discrimination. Only persons who are thoroughly accomplished in scriptures and reasoning (*nyāya*) can determine the difference between these [contradictory scriptural] passages.”⁶⁴⁸ Those with weak intellects must develop their capacity and cultivate understanding of *both* scripture *and* reasoning. In the same section, Śaṅkara goes on to conclude that a wise person (*vidvān*) can renounce householder duties “simply through one’s firm understanding of one’s *ātmā* as the unchanging Brahman devoid of any type of relationship to action.”⁶⁴⁹ Understanding one’s self to be Brahman by means of scripture aided by reasoning thus liberates the knower from all worldly constraints, and it is this state that Nīścaldās embodies and conveys through his works.

Further consideration of the theological aspect of Vedānta offers fruitful possibilities for reconciling the split between reason and spirituality and advancing the study of Vedānta with intellectual rigor, without balking at issues of faith. Of course, if Nīścaldās were asked whether

⁶⁴⁸ *evaṃ vyutthāna-vikalpa-krama-yatheṣṭāśrama-pratipatti-pratipādakāni hi śruti-smṛti-vākyaṇi śataśa upalabhyanta itaretara-viruddhāni. ācāraś ca tadvidām. vipratipattiś ca śāstrārtha-pratapattīṇāṃ bahuvidām api. ato na śakyate śāstrārtho manda-buddhibhir vivekena pratipattum. pariniṣṭhata-śāstra-nyāya-buddhibhir eva hy eṣāṃ vākyaṇāṃ viśaya-vibhāgaḥ śakyate vadhārayitum* (Śaṅkarācārya, Ānandagiri, and Vidyāranya 1986, 384).

⁶⁴⁹ *ato viduṣas tāvat pārvirāyaṃ siddhaṃ saṃpradānādi-karma-kāraka-jātyādi-śūnyāvikriya-brahmātma-dṛḍha-pratipatti-mātreṇa* (Śaṅkarācārya, Ānandagiri, and Vidyāranya 1986, 386).

the *VP* is philosophy or theology, he would most likely remind us that names are only erroneous, empirical constructs that have no reality independent of Brahman. He would then sing us his opening *dohā* to the *VP*:

*asti bhāti priya sindhu meṃ, nāma rūpa jañjāla;
lakṣi tihim ātma-svarūpa nija, hvai tatkāla nihāla.*

In the ocean of being, manifestation, and dearness [i.e. Brahman],
name and form are a trap.

Upon seeing the nature one's own *ātmā* there, one will immediately become happy.

10.12 A Final Summation

As a final summation of the *VP*, it is instructive to apply the method suggested by Nīscaldās to discern the intent (*tātparya*) of a given text, namely, the determination of its relation to the six characteristics (*ṣaḍ-līṅga*), which assist in the comprehension of the work via verbal testimony as means of cognition (*śabda pramāṇa*): 1) the consistency of the introduction and conclusion (*upakrama upasaṃhāra kī ekarūpatā*); 2) repetition (*abhyāsa*); 3) originality (*apūrvatā*); 4) result (*phala*); 5) praise (*arthavāda*); and 6) demonstration (*upapatti*) (*VP* 3.17, 79-80; section 5.4.3, p. 135).

- 1) Consistency of the introduction and conclusion: Nīscaldās started the text with the three questions about a *vṛtti*: its nature, cause, and purpose (*VP* 1.1, 1; section 5.2, p. 119).
Towards the end of the text, he reminds of the three questions and finishes with the answer to the third (*VP* 8.145-6, 429-30; section 9.2, p. 330).
- 2) Repetition: As we have noted in sections 10.5 and 10.7, Nīscaldās time and again reminds the reader that the goal of Vedānta is the knowledge of Brahman.
- 3) Originality: The two major innovations of Nīscaldās are as follows: a) his insistence that the knowledge of Vedānta, namely, Brahman, is accessible to all humans, irrespective of caste; and b) his reorganization of over a millennium's worth of post-Śaṅkara Advaita literature, in which he compares various prior standpoints on doctrinal issues and then presents what he considers valid and in keeping with Advaita doctrine, thereby helping the seeker along with either the refutation of conflicting views where relevant or, at times, the reconciliation of an apparent conflict.

- 4) Result: The cessation of the conceived and the knowledge of Brahman, which is arrived at by means of a *vṛtti* in the form of Brahman (*brahmākāra vṛtti*).
- 5) Praise: The attainment of happiness mentioned in the opening *dohā* (stated in the previous section), and also at the conclusion of the *VP* (8.172, 445-6; section 9.3.2, p. 346).
- 6) Demonstration: This can be understood as the use of reasoning (*yukti*) to support the stated result, the knowledge of Brahman, as seen throughout the *VP*, especially in the notable examples reviewed in section 10.7.

Nīścaldās himself professed to be a knower of Brahman (*brahma-vit*) (*VS* vv. 1.1-5; section 3.8, p. 71ff), and hence he considered his work too to be the equivalent of the Vedas and capable of providing the reader the knowledge of Brahman (*VS* v. 3.10; section 4.1, p. 80). He did not present this boastfully but from his perspective of ultimate reality. Thus, he considered himself to be a continuation of the lineage of other knowers of Brahman within the Advaita tradition, and his work to be a contribution to the Advaita tradition. Like those written before him, the *VP* expresses the same truth as Vedānta scripture.

॥ हरिः ॐ श्री गुरुभ्यो नमः ॥ हरिः ॐ तत्सत् ॥

10.13 Future Directions

In the course of my research for this dissertation, I had to constrain myself from exploring many interesting and related ramifications in order to keep the project manageable, or as Nīścaldās would say, “*granth vṛddhī ke bhay se*, for fear of prolixity.” Some of the topics left unexplored, which I hope to revisit at greater depth in the future, include (in no particular order):

- 1) A translation and analysis of Nīścaldās’s least known and rarest published Advaita work, the *Yuktiprakāś*, an independent treatise in which Vedānta axioms are explained through *drṣṭānta*-s, illustrations, and *dārṣṭāntas*, principles deduced from those illustrations and then reinforced with testimony from *śruti* and *smṛti*, all of which are presented in the form of a dialog between a teacher and student, in thirty-nine *yuktis*, “logical arguments.”
- 2) A study of the soteriological path laid out in the *VS*, which has some interesting, lesser discussed aspects.

- 3) A more detailed analysis of the KCNB-DJV arguments on the nature of superimposition in Advaita, and a comparison to the treatment of the same by Acyutakṛṣṇa Tīrtha in his *Kṛṣṇālaṅkāra* commentary to *SLS*.
- 4) A closer look at the arguments in various Advaita *prakaraṇa-granthas* such as the *Pañcapādikā*, its *Vivaraṇa*, *SLS*, *SŚ*, *Brahma-siddhi*, *Iṣṭa-siddhi*, *Advaita-siddhi*, to better determine the parallels to Nīścaldās's ideas.
- 5) Nīścaldās's scriptural attitude to Advaita texts, as revealed by his three Vedānta works.
- 6) Further consideration of the possibility that Nīścaldās's "outsider status" might have some influence on his choice to write in the vernacular. The paucity of biographical information demands alternative sources for this issue, perhaps his works themselves.
- 7) A study of the evolution of what I called the "caste-leveling sentiment," particularly in the period between Śaṅkara and Nīścaldās. Such a study might focus on a comparison of the virtually coterminous approaches of Dayananda Saraswati (Ārya Samāj), Vivekananda, Ramakrishna, Ramana Maharshi or might also include the influences of Kabir, Nānak, Dādū and other *nirguṇī sants*. Viṭhobā, Eknāth and the other Maharashtrian saints are also of interest in this regard.
- 8) As I explored the issue of caste, I came across the *Vajrasūcī Upaniṣad*, which expresses interesting caste-leveling sentiments. A study of this Upaniṣad and its relation to Aśvaghōṣa's *Vajrasūcī* would be a compelling project.
- 9) A more comprehensive treatment of caste across the Advaita corpus is another possible area for further exploration.
- 10) A study of the exact meaning of *nididhyāsana* in the Advaita tradition. See n. 161, p. 65, and n. 582 on p. 317 for the beginnings of an interesting issue.
- 11) Further development of the theological study of Vedānta. Also, a study of *śravaṇa*, *manana*, *nididhyāsana* and parallels with the Christian *lectio divina*. Guigo II offers four stages of *lectio*, *meditatio*, *oratio*, and *contemplatio* (1981, ©1978).
- 12) Further identification and exploration of Vedānta texts in Hindi and other vernacular languages that would provide interesting parallels and contrasts to the *VP*.

Appendix 1: Works and Authors Cited in *VP*

All section and page numbers are to the KS edition of *VP*, Nīscaldās (1899). All dates are CE, unless otherwise noted, and are based on Thangaswami (1980), unless more accurate information is available. Portions of the names within square-brackets either do not occur in the source, or occur inconsistently.

A1.1 Works Cited by Name

<i>Text</i>	<i>Author (* = not named), date</i>	<i>Where cited</i>
<i>Abheda-ratna</i>	Mallanārādhya* (1400-1500)	3.18, 83
<i>Advaita-dīpikā</i>	Nṛsiṃhāśrama, 16 th c.	8.71-2, 390-1; 8.79, 395; 8.82, 397
<i>Advaita-cintā-kaustubha</i>	Mahādevānanda Sarasvatī,* ca. 1650	1.1, 1
<i>Alaṅkāra-candrikā</i>	Gajapati Vīra Nārāyaṇadeva,* 17 th c.	4.5, 97
<i>Anirvacanīya-vāda</i>	Brahmānanda, n.d.	7.64, 314
<i>Anyathā-khyāti-vāda</i>	Gadādhara Bhaṭṭācārya, 1604-1709	1.16, 28
[<i>Aṣṭādhyāyī</i>]- <i>Mahābhāṣya</i>	Patañjali, 150 BCE	3.18, 83
<i>Avayava-grantha</i>	[Gadādhara] Bhaṭṭācārya, 1604-1709	2.8, 43
<i>Bhāmatī</i>	Vācaspati Mīśra, 842	3.18, 79; 8.92, 403; 8.124, 418
<i>Bheda-dhik-kāra</i>	Nṛsiṃhāśrama,* 16 th c.	6.34, 185; 6.34, 187;
<i>Brahma-sūtra ŚBh</i>	Śaṅkara, early 8 th c.	7.40, 276; 8. 93, 404; 8.97, 406
<i>Brahmānanda</i> (PD 11-15)	Bhāratīrtha, 1300-1380	8.19, 355
<i>Brahma-vidyābharāṇa</i>	Advaitānandabodhendra,* 1700	3.18, 79; 7.8, 224; 7.9, 225; 7.64, 312; 7.64, 314
<i>Bṛhadāraṇyaka ŚBh</i>	Śaṅkara,* early 8 th c.	8.28, 362; 8.53, 378
<i>Bṛhadāraṇyaka Vārtika</i>	Sureśvara,* 8 th c.	8.28, 362
<i>Citra-dīpa</i> (PD 6)	Vidyāraṇya, 1296-1386	8.9, 348; 8.13-4, 350-1; 8.17, 352
<i>Dīdhiti</i>	Raghunātha Śiromaṇi Bhaṭṭācārya, 1510	3.4, 48; 6.9, 126
<i>Dṛg-dṛśya-viveka</i>	Vidyāraṇya, 1296-1386	8.20, 355
<i>Kalpataru</i>	Amalānanda* 1247-1347	8.97, 406
<i>Kāvya-prakāśa</i>	Mammaṭa, 11 th c.	3.10, 61; 3.10, 62; 3.10, 65; 3.16, 79
<i>Kāvya-prakāśa</i> , unnamed comm. on	Jayarāma Bhaṭṭācārya, 1620	3.10, 62
<i>Kāvya-pradīpa</i>	Govinda Bhaṭṭa, 14-15 th c.	3.10, 61; 3.10, 62; 3.16, 79
<i>Khyāti-vicāra</i>	Gauḍabrahmānanda, 1600-1700	1.17, 29
[<i>Mahā</i>] <i>Bhūta-viveka</i> (PD 2)	Vidyāraṇya, 1296-1386	8.23, 359
<i>Mañjūṣā</i> (comm. on Śaktivāda)	Nāgojī Bhaṭṭa, 1670-1750	3.3, 47; 3.18, 81; 3.18, 83; 6.26, 165
<i>Nirukta</i>	Yāska, 600-500 BCE	8.171, 444

Text	Author (* = not named), date	Where cited
<i>Nyāya-kaustubha</i>	Mahādeva Puṇatāmakara, ca. 1675	1.18, 32; 4.1, 93
<i>Nyāya-makaranda</i>	Ānandabodha Bhaṭṭāraka,* ca. 1050-1150	8.163, 437; 8.164-8, 438-43; 8.171, 444
<i>Nyāya-sūtra</i>	Gautama, 150	3.4, 48
<i>Nyāya-sudhā</i>	Gauḍeśvara Jñānottama (Satyānanda),* 1175	8.87, 400
<i>Nyāya-vācaspatya</i>	Tārānātha Tarkavācaspati Bhaṭṭācārya, 1812-1885	7.49, 283
<i>Pañcadaśī</i>	Vidyāraṇya, 1296-1386	8.131, 423
<i>Pañcakośa-viveka</i> (PD 3)	Vidyāraṇya, 1296-1386	8.17, 352
<i>Pañcapādikā</i>	Padmapāda, 8 th c.	1.21, 34; 7.19, 239; 8.53-5, 378-83
[<i>Pañcapādikā</i>]- <i>Vivaraṇa</i>	Prakāśātman, 11 th c.	3.18, 81; 7.18, 238; 7.69, 324; 8.13-5, 350-1
<i>Śabda-ratna</i> (vyākaraṇa)	Haridīkṣita, 1670	3.18, 82
<i>Śabda-śakti-prakāśika</i>	Jagadīśa Bhaṭṭācārya,* ca. 1600	5.2, 105
<i>Śaktivāda</i>	Gadādhara Bhaṭṭācārya, 1604-1709	3.3, 47; 3.4, 48; 3.4, 51; 3.14, 73; 3.14, 74
<i>Samkṣepa-sārīraka</i> (SŚ)	Sarvajñātman, 1050	3.7, 54; 7.4, 215; 7.16, 236; 7.17, 238; 7.19, 239; 8.6, 347; 8.69, 389-90; 8.72, 391-2; 8.89, 401; 8.98, 406-7
<i>Sanṅati-grantha</i>	Gadādhara Bhaṭṭācārya, 1604-1709	1.15, 26
<i>Sārīraka</i> (BS)	Bādarāyaṇa, 200 BCE?	7.5, 219; 7.5, 220; 7.8, 223; 7.47, 281; 8.4, 345
[<i>Siddhānta</i>]- <i>Kaumudī</i>	Bhaṭṭoji Dīkṣita, 17 th c.	3.20, 89
<i>Śitikanṭhī</i>	Śitikanṭha, 15 th c.	1.16, 27
<i>Śūdra-kamalākara</i> = <i>Śūdra-</i> <i>dharma-tattva-prakāśa</i>	Kamalākara Bhaṭṭa,* ca. 1860	8.109, 412
<i>Tattva-dīpikā</i>	Citsukha,* 1120-1220	8.75, 393
<i>Tattvānusandhāna</i>	Mahādevānanda Sarasvatī,* ca. 1650	1.1, 1
<i>Tattva-śuddhi</i>	Jñānaghana,* 950-1050	8.85, 399-400
<i>Tattva-viveka</i> (PD 1)	Vidyāraṇya, 1296-1386	8.6, 346
<i>Trṭi-dīpa</i> (PD 7)	Vidyāraṇya, 1296-1386	8.26, 360
<i>Uddyotana</i> (comm. on <i>Kāvya-pradīpa</i>)	Nāgojī Bhaṭṭa, 1670-1750	3.10, 62
[<i>Vaiyākaraṇa</i>]- <i>Bhūṣaṇa</i> [-sāra]	Kauṇḍa Bhaṭṭa,* 1640	3.3, 47
<i>Vedānta-cūḍāmaṇi</i> = <i>Vedānta-śikhāmaṇi</i>	Rāmakṛṣṇa Dīkṣita, 1625-1700	3.14, 75; 3.18, 82; 4.5, 96-8; 4.6, 101; 6.35, 188; 6.35, 191
<i>Vedānta-paribhāṣā</i>	Dharmarāja Adhvarīndra, 1550-1650	1.2, 4; 1.18, 32; 2.5, 40; 2.5, 41; 3.10, 64; 3.14, 71; 3.18, 82; 4.5, 96-8; 4.6, 101; 6.34, 184; 6.34, 187; 6.35, 191
[<i>Vedānta</i>]- <i>Siddhānta-</i>	Prakāśānanda,* 1550-1650	8.28, 361; 8.76, 394

Text	Author (* = not named), date	Where cited
<i>muktāvalī</i>		
<i>Vedānta-sīkhāmani</i>	Rāmakṛṣṇa Dīkṣita, 1625-1700	3.18, 83
<i>Vicārsāgar</i>	Nīscaldās,* 1791-1863	1.1, 2; 1.17, 28; 1.19, 30; 1.18, 31; 2.3, 47; 3.8, 54; 3.13, 68; 7.7, 222; 7.8, 224; 7.58, 291; 8.18, 354; 8.75, 393; 8.90, 402
<i>Viṣayatā-vicāra</i>	Raghunātha [Śiromaṇi] Bhaṭṭācārya, 1510, and Jayarāma [pañcānana] Bhaṭṭācārya, 1620	1.15, 26
<i>Vyāpti-nirūpaṇa</i>	Jagadīśa Bhaṭṭācārya, ca. 1600	2.1, 36
<i>Vyutpatti-vāda</i>	Gadādhara Bhaṭṭācārya,* 1604-1709	3.4, 48

A1.2 Authors Cited by Name

Author, date	Where cited
Advaita-vidyācārya, n.d.	8.135, 424; 8.139, 427; 8.144, 429
Bādarāyaṇa (<i>sūtrakāra</i>), 200 BCE?	8.97, 406
Bhāratīrtha, 1300-1380	8.19, 355
Brahmānanda, n.d.	7.64, 314
Dharmarāja Adhvarīndra, 1550-1650	2.4, 41; 3.14, 71; 3.14, 73; 3.14, 74; 3.14, 75; 4.6, 101
[Cakravartī-]Gadādhara-bhaṭṭācārya, 1604-1709	1.15, 26; 1.16, 28; 2.8, 43; 3.3, 47; 3.4, 51; 3.10, 65; 3.11, 65
Gaṅgeśopadhyāya, 1320	6.10, 137
Gauḍabrahmānanda, 1600-1700	1.17, 29
Gauḍapāda, 7 th c.	8.67, 388-9
Gaurīkānt Bhaṭṭācārya, 1620	1.11, 21
Gotama/Gautama, 150	2.4, 48; 7.63, 307
Govinda Bhaṭṭa, 14-15 th c.	3.10, 61
Jagadīśa Bhaṭṭācārya, ca. 1600	2.1, 36; 3.20, 90
Jaimini, 200 BCE?	3.17, 79
Jayarāma [Pañcānana] Bhaṭṭācārya, 1620	1.15, 26; 3.10, 62; 7.60, 298
Kaṇāda, 1 st c.	3.18, 82; 7.63, 307
Kapila, n.d.	7.63, 307
Kavitārka Cakravartī Nṛsiṃha Bhaṭṭopādhyāya (KCNB), ca. 1283	7.17, 237; 7.17, 238; 7.22, 245-6; 7.23, 246-9; 7.25-34, 251-67
[Kumārila] Bhaṭṭa, 600-700	1.2, 4; 6.30, 176; 6.34, 185; 7.75, 333-4; 7.79, 338
Mamṣaṭa, 11 th c.	3.10, 61; 3.10, 66
Murāri Miśra, 1150-1220.	7.74, 332; 7.78, 338
Nāgojī Bhaṭṭa, 1670-1750	3.10, 62; 3.18, 81; 3.18, 83
Nīscaldās, 1791-1863	8.83, 397

Author, date	Where cited
Nṛsiṃhāśrama, 16 th c.	3.20, 88; 8.71, 390-1; 8.84, 398
Padmapāda (<i>pañcapādikā-kāra</i>), 8 th c.	1.21, 34; 8.53, 378-9; 8.121, 417
Pāṇini, 5 th c. BCE	3.20, 89
Patañjali, 150 BCE	2.3, 47
Prabhākara, 600-700	7.65, 314; 7.73, 332; 7.80, 338; 8.135, 425
Prakāśātman (as Prakāśātma-śrīcaraṇa). 11 th c.	3.18, 81; 8.70, 390
Prakāśātman (as [<i>pañcapādikā-</i>] <i>vivaraṇakāra</i>), 11th c.	3.18, 83; 7.18, 238; 8.2, 343; 8.5, 346; 8.21-23, 356-8; 8.31-2, 364-6; 8.39, 369; 8.52, 378; 8.53, 379; 8.93-5, 403-5; 8.101, 407
Raghunātha Śiromaṇi Bhaṭṭācārya, 1510	1.15, 26; 3.4, 48; 3.4, 50; 3.14, 74; 6.9, 126
Rāmakṛṣṇa Dīkṣita (son of Dharmarāja), 1625-1700	3.14, 75; 6.35, 188; 6.35, 191; 6.35, 194
Śaṅkara (as <i>bhāṣyakāra</i>), early 8 th c.	7.8, 223; 8.28, 362; 8.67, 388-9; 8.91, 403; 8.109, 412; 8.167, 441
Sarvajñātman, 1050	8.69, 390; 8.98, 406-7; 8.118, 416; 8.133, 424
Sureśvara (<i>Vārtikakāra</i>), 8 th c.	8.28, 362; 8.106, 409-10; 8.156, 435
Udayanācārya, 984	4.5, 98
Vācaspati Miśra, 842	1.18, 30; 1.21, 34; 7.4, 215; 7.4, 216; 8.2, 343; 8.30, 364; 8.92, 403; 8.94-5, 404-5; 8.124, 418
Vidyāraṇya, 1296-1386	1.18, 30; 8.9-17, 348-56; 8.19, 335; 8.32, 365-6; 8.39, 369; 8.52, 378; 8.53, 379; 8.156, 435
Yāska, 600-500 BCE	8.171, 444

Appendix 2: Source Text Excerpts and Translation

This section provides some general observations regarding the different versions of the *VP* that have been consulted for this dissertation (A2.1). Reproductions of the original text from the manuscript or printed versions are provided in Appendix 3. A transliterated Devanāgarī excerpt of the *VP* source text is provided (A2.2), based on the manuscript version (Nīśchaladāsa 1868, 8.27-8); this version is a hand-written copy, presumably of Nīścaldās's original. The selection provided pertains to the eligibility of śūdras for listening to scriptures other than the Vedas, *VP* 8.109-10. Paraphrased translations of portions from these sections have been cited in sections 4.2 and 8.5.1. The word breaks and (lack of) punctuation follow the manuscript. Hyphens have been inserted by me to permit word-wrap. This is followed by the version in the KS edition (Nīścaldās 1899, *VP* 8.109-10, 411-2), with deviations from the manuscript apart from punctuation and word-breaks noted in bold font for additions and strike-through font for deletions (A2.3). Ātmānand Muni's versions of the same (Nīścaldās 1957, 576-7; 1969, 500-1) are provided next (A2.4), with similar conventions followed to indicate deviations, this time relative to the KS version, and, where applicable, between the two editions themselves. Lastly, a close literal English translation of the manuscript text is provided (A2.5).

A2.1 Some General Observations on the Different Versions

- The manuscript version preserves sentence punctuations (in the form of double-*daṇḍas*) for only the first eleven folios and recto of folio 12, *VP* 1. Midway through verso of folio 12, all punctuation ceases, except for the end of the individual *prakaraṇas*; sentence breaks are indicated by breaks in the *rekḥā*, which are otherwise continuous.
- The manuscript version lacks any paragraph or section breaks, but is a very careful reproduction; there are very few errors that I have noticed. The microform version that I consulted (Nīśchaladāsa 1868; SAMP 12739), however, occasionally has pages out of sequence and/or missing.
- The KS edition inserts punctuations in the form of commas, colons, semicolons, quote marks, hyphens, and periods instead of *daṇḍas*. The text is further divided into numbered subsections, with the addition of section headings. These are listed in the Table of Contents (*viṣayānukramaṇikā*) that precedes the text. The text attempts to be faithful to the manuscript

version,⁶⁵⁰ thought there are many errors in this version, such as spelling, missing words, sometimes even sentences, and occasional inversions of the intended sense through the addition or deletion of negating prefixes, e.g., *adhikāra* instead of *anadhikāra* (VP 8.108, 411). These errors do not appear to be intentional, editorial choices but seem to be the result of carelessness or lack of understanding of the content.

- The Ātmānand Muni versions (Niścaldās 1957; 1969) attempt to clear up these errors and make the text easier to understand. The text is rendered in Modern Standard Hindi, thus revising the Haryānvī language of the preceding versions.
- Where necessary, Ātmānand Muni provides additional explanations, and often attempts to clarify a sentence, by restating implicit references and/or breaking up the sentence into multiple sentences. However, as will be seen in the excerpt that follows, a subtle shift in meaning is introduced.
- Ātmānand Muni is also liberal with his use of the enclitic particles *hī*, *bhī*, and *to*, inserting these into the text and thereby adding further subtle shifts in meaning by way of emphasis or broadening of the clauses.
- It is interesting to note that the second edition of Ātmānand Muni's version is completely reset in a smaller type, and appears to have only minor changes such as changing *ādika* to *ādi*. I have primarily consulted the first edition for this dissertation.
- Both the KS edition as well as Ātmānand Muni's editions tend to hyper-correct and Sanskritize the spelling, e.g., *tatvajñāna*→*tattvajñāna*, *bhagavatnāma*→*bhagavannāma*.

A2.2 Manuscript Text

*anyagranthakāroṃkāyāhamatahai upanayanapūrvakavedakāadhyayanakahyāhai auśūdrakā-
upanayanakahyānahīm yātaiṃvedaśravaṇamaimtośūdrakāadhikāranahīmhai tathāpiśrāvayec-
caturvarṇānityādikavacanataimītiḥāsapurāṇādikānakeśravaṇamaimśūdrakāvīadhikārahai
aupūrvauktavacanamaimśūdrakūṃmupadeśakāniśedhakahyāhai tākāyahaabhiprāyāhai
vaidikamaṃtrasahityajñādikakarṃmaupadeśaśūdrakūṃnnahīm karaitaisaiṃvedoktaprāṇādika-
sagūṇaupāsanākāśūdrakūṃmupadeśanahīmkaraiupadeśamātrakāniśedhanahīm joupdeśamātrakā-*

⁶⁵⁰ It is possible that the manuscript upon which the KS edition is based on is different from the manuscript I have consulted and itself may have been a source of the errors noticed.

niṣedhahovaitaudharmaśāstramaimśūdrajātikedharmakānirūpaṇaniṣphalahovaigā au-
vidyopyogikarmakeabhāvataimjovidyāmaiṇanadhikārahahaiṇ tākāyahasaṃādhanahai
sādhāraṇaasādhāraṇasakalaśubhakarmanakāvidyāmaiṇupayogahai ausatyaasteyakṣamaśāuca-
dānaviṣayataimvimukhatābhāgavatanāmoccaraṇatīrthasānāpaṇcākṣaramaṇtrarājādikanakā-
japaityādikasakalavarṇakesādhāraṇadharmanamaimtathāśūdrakamalākarakrocaturthavarṇake-
asādhāraṇadharmanamaimśūdrakādhikārahai tinakarmanakeanuṣṭhānataimamṭaḥkaraṇa-
kīśuddhidvārāvidyākīprāptisaṃbhavahai yātaiṇitihāsapurāṇādikanakesravanataim-
vivekādikanakesaṃbhavataimśūdrakūṇvījñānārthitvahonetaim vedabhinnaadhyātmagraṇthana-
kesravanādikanamaimśūdrakāvīdhikārahai aubhāṣyakāraṇaṇvīprathamādhyāyaketṛītyapāda-
maiṇyahakahyāhai upanayanapūrvakavedakāadhyayanakahyāhai auśūdrakūṇupanayanake-
abhāvataimnyadyapivedamaimadhikāraṇahīṇhai tathāpipurāṇādikaśravanataimśūdrakūṇvī-
jñānahoyajāvaitaujñānasamakālahīśūdrakāvīpratibamḍharahitamokṣahovaiṇ isarītisaṇ-
bhāṣyakārakevacaṇataimvīvedabhinnañjñānahetuadhyātmagraṇthanakesravanamaimśūdrakā-
dhikārahai aujanmāṇtarasaṃskārataimamṭyajādikanakūṇvījñāśāhoyajāvaitaupauruṣeya-
vacanataimtinakāvījñānahoyakaikāryasahitaavidyākīnivṛttirūpamokṣahovaiṇ yātaiṇdeva-
asuranakīnāmīsakalamanuṣyakūṇmatvajñānakādhikārahai ātmasvarūpakeyathārthajñānakūṇ-
matvajñānakahaiṇ ātmahīnakoīsarītrahovaitaujñānakāanadhikārahovai yātaiṇātmajñāna-
kīśāmarthyamanuṣyamātramaimṇhai

A2.3 KS Text

**anyagranthakāranakī rītisaṇ śūdrakābhī vedabhinnaapuranaitihāśādirūpa adhyātmag-
raṇthanake śravanādikamaim adhikāra ||109||⁶⁵¹**

anya granthakāroṃkā yaha mata hai:—upanayanapūrvaka vedakā adhyayana kahyā hai au
śūdrakā upanayana kahyā nahīṇ; yātaiṇ vedaśravanamaim ~~tau~~ śūdrakā adhikāra nahīṇ hai,
tathāpi “śrāvayeccaturo varṇān” ityādika vacanataim itihāsapurāṇādikanake śravanamaim
śūdrakā~~abhī~~ adhikāra hai.⁶⁵² au pūrva ukta vacanamaim śūdrakūṇ upadeśakā niṣedha kahyā hai
tākā yaha abhiprāya hai:—vaidika maṇtrasahit yajñādika karma~~an~~opadeśa śūdrakūṇ nahīṇ
karai, taisaim vedokta prāṇādika saguṇaupāsanākā śūdrakūṇ upadeśa nahīṇ karai,
upadeśamātrakā niṣedha nahīṇ. jo upadeśamātrakā niṣedha hovai tau dharmasāstramaim

⁶⁵¹ Section titles added in KS edition.

⁶⁵² The KS edition uses periods for punctuation instead of the expected *daṇḍa* in the Devanāgarī context.

*śūdrajātike dharmakā nirūpaṇa niṣphala hovaigā. au vidyopyogi karmake abhāvataim jo vidyāmaiṃ anadhikāra kahaiṃ haiṃ. tākā yaha samādhana hai—sādhāraṇa asādhāraṇa sakala śubhakarmakā vidyāmaiṃ upayoga hai. au satya, asteya, kṣamā, śauca, dāna, viśayataim vimukhatā, bhāṣagavatānāmoccarāṇa, tīrthasānā, paṃcākṣaramamtrārājādikanakā japa, ityādika sakala varṇake sādharāṇa dharmanamaiṃ tathā śūdrakamalākarokta caturthavarṇake asādhāraṇa dharmanamaiṃ śūdrakā adhikāra hai, tinakarmanake anuṣṭhānataim amṭah-karaṇakī śuddhidvārā vidyākī prāpti sambhavai hai; yātaiṃ itihāsa purāṇādikanake śravaṇataim vivekādikanake sambhavataim śūdrakūṃ**bhī** jñānārthitva honetaim vedabhinna adhyātmagraṃthanake śravaṇādikanamaiṃ śūdrakā**bhī** adhikāra hai. au bhāṣyakāranaiṃ**bhī** prathamādhyāyake trītiyapādamaiṃ yaha kahyāhai:—upanayanapūrvaka vedakā adhyayana kahyā hai; au śūdrakūṃ upanayanake abhāvataim yadyapi vedamaiṃ adhikāra nahīṃ, hai, tathāpi purāṇādika śravaṇataim śūdrakūṃ**bhī** jñāna hoyā jāvai tau jñānasamakālahī śūdrakā**bhī** pratibamdharahita mokṣa hovaihai. isarītisaiṃ bhāṣyakārake vacanataim**bhī** vedabhinna jñānahetu adhyātmagraṃthanake śravaṇamaiṃ śūdrakā adhikāra hai.*

manuṣyamātrakūṃ bhakti au jñānakā adhikāra

amṭyajādīmanuṣyanakūṃ tattvajñānakā adhikāra ||110||

~~amṭjanmāṃtara saṃskārataim amṭyajādikanakūṃ**bhī** jījñāsā hoyā jāvai tau pauruṣeya-~~
vacanataim tinako**ābhī** jñāna hoyakai kāryasahita avidyākī nivṛttirūpa mokṣa hovai hai, yātaiṃ devaasuranakī nāmī sakalamanuṣyanakūṃ tattvajñānakā adhikāra⁶⁵³ hai. ātmasvarūpake yathārtha jñānakūṃ tattvajñāna kahaiṃ haiṃ. ātmahīna koī śarīra hovai tau jñānakā anadhikāra hovai, yātaiṃ ātmajñānakī sāmārthya manuṣyamātramaiṃ hai, **parantu:-**⁶⁵⁴

A2.4 Ātmānand Muni Text

107:⁶⁵⁵ ~~anya granthakāromānakī rītiseaiṃ śūdrakā**bhī** vedabhinna purāṇa-itihāsādirūpa~~

~~adhyātma-graṃtho**manake** śravaṇādika⁶⁵⁶ meaiṃ śūdrakā **bhī** adhikāra ||109||~~

anya granthakāromkā ~~aisāyaha~~ mata hai **kī** upanayanapūrvaka **hī** vedā**kā**-adhyayana kahyā **kahā gayā** hai, ~~amṭ~~**parantu** śūdrakā **ke liye to** upanayana **kahyā kī vidhi hī** nahīṃ hai.⁶⁵⁷ ~~yātaiṃ~~

⁶⁵³ The text that is provided unitalicized here appears bold-faced in the KS edition.

⁶⁵⁴ This last word appears with the next sentence in the manuscript version.

⁶⁵⁵ Ātmānand Muni preserves the section titles found in KS edition. His numbering is slightly different here, as he has combined some earlier sections of the KS edition.

⁶⁵⁶ Differences between the second edition of Ātmānand Muni (1969) relative to the first (1957) are shown with a gray background.

isaliye yadyapi vedaśravaṇameaiṁ to~~au~~ śūdrakā adhikāra nahīm hai; tathāpi ‘śrāvayeccaturo varṇān’ (*cārom varṇomko śravaṇa karānā cāhiye*) ityādika~~ka~~ vacanoma~~asetaiṁ~~ itihāsa-purāṇādika~~manake~~ śravaṇameaiṁ śūdrakā bhī adhikāra hai; ~~autathā~~ pūrvoa~~ukta~~ vacanameaiṁ **jo** śūdrako~~ūm~~ upadeśakā niṣedha ~~kahyā~~**kiyā gayā** hai, **usatākā** ~~yaha~~ abhiprāya **yahī** hai:— **ki śūdrako** vaidika maṁtro~~masahit~~ yajñādika~~ka~~ karmo~~mkā~~ upadeśa **athavā** śūdrako~~ūm~~ nahīm karai, ~~taisaiṁ~~ vedokta prāṇādika~~ka~~ saguṇaupāsānākā ~~śūdrako~~ūm~~~~ upadeśa nahīm ~~karai~~**karnā cāhiye**, **parantu vahām** upadeśamātrakā niṣedha nahīm **kiyā gayā hai**. **jeyadi** updeśamātrakā niṣedha ~~hova~~**imānā jāya to~~au~~** dharmaśāstrameaiṁ śūdra jātike dharmakā **jo** nirūpaṇa **hai vaha** niṣphala hovaigā. ~~au~~ vidyopyogi karmake abhāvasetaiṁ **jo** vidyāmeaiṁ anadhikāra ~~kahaiṁ~~**kahā gayā** haiṁ, **usatākā** ~~yaha~~ samādhana **yaha** hai—⁶⁵⁸

sādhāraṇa-asādhāraṇa ~~sakala~~**yāvat** śubha~~ka~~ karmo~~manakā~~ vidyāmeaiṁ **hī** upayoga hai. ~~au~~**arthāt** satya, asteya, kṣamā, śauca, dāna, viśayoma~~asetaiṁ~~ vimukhatā, bhagava~~nnā~~moccarāṇa, tīrthasānā, pañcākṣarama~~nn~~trārājādika~~manakā~~ japa,—ityādika ~~sakala~~ **jo sabhī** varṇoma~~ake~~ sādhāraṇa dharma~~namaiṁ~~ **haiṁ aura** ~~tathā~~ śūdrakamalākara~~oktake~~ **vacanoma~~ke~~ anusāra** caturtha varṇake asādhāraṇa dharma~~namaiṁ~~ **haiṁ, unameṁ to** śūdrakā **bhī** adhikāra hai;. ~~ti~~una~~ka~~ karmo~~manake~~ anuṣṭhānasetaiṁ **śūdrako bhī** an~~ni~~taḥkaraṇakī śuddhidvārā vidyākī prāpti sambhava~~i~~ **hoṭī** hai;. ~~yātaiṁ~~ isa prakāra itihāsa-purāṇādika~~manake~~ śravaṇasetaiṁ **śūdrameṁ** vivekādika~~manakā~~ ~~se~~ sambhavataiṁ **hotā hai, vivekādika~~manakā~~** ~~śūdrako~~ūm~~ bhī~~ jñānārthitva ~~honetaiṁ~~ **sambhava hotā hai aura phira jñānārthitva** se vedabhinna adhyātma~~grā~~ma~~manake~~ śravaṇa~~adika~~namaiṁ ~~dvārā~~ śūdrako~~ūm~~ bhī adhikāra **vidyā kī** prāpti **sambhava hoṭī** hai.⁶⁵⁹ ~~au~~ **śrī**bhāṣyakāra~~neaiṁ~~ ~~bhī~~ **brahmasūtra** prathamādhyāyake trtīya~~ka~~ pādameaiṁ ~~yaha~~ ~~kahyā~~**aisa kathana kiyā** hai:—‘upanayanapūrvaka **hī** ~~vedakā~~ **vedā** adhyayana~~ka~~ ~~kahyā~~**kā** adhikāra hai; ~~au~~, **parantu** śūdrako~~ūm~~ upanayanake abhāvasetaiṁ yadyapi **usakā** vedameaiṁ **to** adhikāra nahīm; hai; tathāpi purāṇādika~~ka~~ śravaṇasetaiṁ **hī yadi** **use** śūdrako~~ūm~~ bhī jñāna hoya jāyava~~i~~ ~~to~~au~~~~ jñānasamakāla~~ka~~ ~~hī~~ **usa**śūdrakā~~ka~~ ~~bhī~~ pratibandha~~ka~~ ~~karahita~~ mokṣa hova~~i~~ **jātā** hai.’

⁶⁵⁷ Ātmānand Muni uses *daṇḍas* for punctuation.

⁶⁵⁸ A new paragraph break is introduced. In general, the KS edition has far fewer paragraph breaks compared to Ātmānand Muni’s version.

⁶⁵⁹ Not only has the present passage been made overly prolix, the meaning has been subtly shifted to where the emphasis is not on the śūdra’s right (*adhikāra*) to listen to, contemplate and meditate on non-Vedic scripture but on the possibility of the śūdra acquiring knowledge through listening.

*isarttisaiṃ prakāra śrībhāṣyakārake vacanomaṣetaiṃ bhī śudrakā vedabhinna jñānahetu
adhyātma_granṭhomaṇake śravaṇameaiṃ śudrakā adhikāra hai.*

108: *manuṣyamātrakoṭiṃ bhakti aura jñānakā adhikāra tathā*

aṃtyajādi_manuṣyomaṇakoṭiṃ tattvajñānakā adhikāra #110#

*janmānṭarake saṃskāromaṣetaiṃ yadi aṃtyajādikoṭiṃ bhī jijñāsā hoyā jāyavai
toṃ pauraṣeya_vacanasetaiṃ utinakoṭiṃ bhī jñāna hoyakaraī kāryasahita avidyākī nivṛttirūpa
mokṣa hoyai jātā hai. isaliyeyātaiṃ deva_va_asuromaṇakāke samānanāṃ
sabhīsakalā_manuṣyomaṇakoṭiṃ tattvajñānakā adhikāra⁶⁶⁰ hai. ātmasvarūpake yathārtha
jñānakoṭiṃ tattvajñāna kahateṃ haiṃ. yadi koī śarīra ātmahīna koī śarīra hoyai toṃ use
jñānakā anadhikāra kahā jāyakhoyai, isaliyeyātaiṃ ātmajñānakī sāmārthya to
manuṣyamātrameaiṃ hī hai. parantu:-*

A2.5 Literal Translation (of Manuscript Version)

The opinion of other authors is [that] the study of Vedas is only spoken of after *upanayana* [the sacred thread ceremony which only the upper three castes are eligible for], and the *upanayana* of a śūdra is not spoken of. Therefore, although a śūdra is not eligible for listening to the Vedas, nevertheless, from statements such as “*śrāvayec caturo varṇān*, [all four castes ought to be read to (from causative of ‘to listen’)],” even a śūdra is eligible for listening to *itihāsa* and *purāṇas*, etc. And the prohibition of instructing a śūdra in what was stated earlier, its intent is: the instruction (*upadeśa*) of Vedic *mantras* and rituals such as *yajñas*, etc., is not to be imparted to a śūdra. Similarly the instruction of *saguṇa* meditation (*upāsanā*) on breath, etc., mentioned in the Vedas should not be imparted to a śūdra. Mere instruction is not prohibited. If mere instruction were to be prohibited then the description of the duties (*dharma*) of the śūdra caste in the *dharmaśāstra* [texts] would be in vain. And the reconciliation of the stated ineligibility [of the śūdra] for knowledge owing to the absence of the [śūdra’s performance of] actions useful for knowledge is: all good acts, whether ordinary or extraordinary, are useful for knowledge. And truth (*satya*), not stealing (*asteya*), forbearance (*kṣamā*), purity (*śauca*), charity (*dāna*), abstaining (*vimukhatā*) from [sense-]objects, reciting the name of God, bathing at pilgrimage sites (*tīrthasnāna*), recitation of the five syllable ‘king of mantras’ [*om namaḥ śivāya*] and other

⁶⁶⁰ Unlike the KS version, the text here is not emphasized in bold-face font but appears in the same font as the preceding and following text.

[mantras], etc., [which are] the universal duties (*sādhāraṇa-dharma*) of all castes, and, according to the *Śūdra-kamalākara* [a text also known as *Śūdra-dharma-tattva-prakāśa*, a manual on the conduct of life and social behavior for śūdras, see Appendix 1.1] the extraordinary duties of the fourth caste [śūdras], the śūdra is eligible for [all these duties]. By the performance of these actions, it is possible for even a śūdra to attain knowledge through the purification of the *antaḥ-karaṇa*. Thus because of the possibility of discrimination (*viveka*) and the rest⁶⁶¹ [arising] through listening to the *itihāsa*, *purāṇas*, etc., from which a śūdra too can have the desire for knowledge, even a śūdra has eligibility for listening to [and contemplating and meditating on] texts about the *ātmā* that are not Vedic. And even Śaṅkara has stated in *BS[ŚBh]* 1.3, “The study of the Vedas is only stated after the *upanayana*, and although a śūdra is ineligible for study of the Vedas due to the absence of the *upanayana*, nevertheless, if knowledge may occur to even a śūdra through listening to the *purāṇas*, etc., then even the śūdra’s liberation occurs at the same time that knowledge occurs, without any obstacles remaining.” Thus even according to Śaṅkara, a śūdra, for the sake of knowledge, is eligible for listening to texts about the *ātmā* which are other than the Vedas. [*VP* 8.110:] And, due to the latent tendencies (*saṃskāra*) from prior births, if even those of the lowest caste, etc., develop a desire to know (*jijñāsā*) [Brahman], then, by means of human words, they too can get knowledge and get liberated in the form of the cessation of ignorance along with its effects. Therefore, like gods and demons, all humans are eligible for Brahman-realization (*tattva-jñāna*). The true knowledge of the nature of the *ātmā* is called Brahman-realization. If some body (*śarīra*) were without an *ātmā*, then it could be considered ineligible for knowledge. Therefore, only humans have the capability of self-knowledge (*ātma-jñāna*).

⁶⁶¹ The *sādhana-catuṣṭaya*, four-fold means of discrimination (*viveka*), detachment (*vairāgya*), the six “wealths” (*ṣaṭ-sampatti*, see n. 198, p. 81), and the desire for liberation (*mumukṣutā*).

Appendix 3: Reproductions of Select Pages of the *VP* from the Versions Consulted

This section contains images of the following:

- Figure 11: The opening page of the manuscript edition of the *VP*
(Nischaladāsa 1868, 1.0).
- Figure 12: The colophon to the manuscript edition of the *VP*
(Nischaladāsa 1868, 8.41).
- Figure 13: The text presented in Appendix 2 (A2.2)
(Nischaladāsa 1868, 8.27-8).
- Figure 14 and Figure 15: Examples of the errors found in the KS edition,
VP 8.57, 384; 8.123-5, 418.
- Figure 16 and Figure 17: The text presented in Appendix 2 (A2.3),
(Niscaldās 1899, *VP* 8.109-10, 411-2).
- Figure 18 and Figure 19: The text presented in Appendix 2 (A2.4),
(Niscaldās 1957, 576-7; 1969, 500-1).

[illegible]

Figure 11: The opening page of the manuscript edition of the VP (Nīśchaladāsa 1868, 1.0).

४९ वसि.

॥कवित्व ॥ इति मभाकरपंथरच्योर्हिल्लितपंथ ॥ अतिसंकोविदस्वामिनिश्चलचतुर्पदी ॥ अष्टहंपकासभयमतभूकरतनांस ॥ आवारिसुभाबहो
तत्रानंदस्वरूपही ॥ सूरदासगुलसोकेसवदासप्रादिरभले ॥ छंदनकरचर्वेमेंभयेकविभूषही ॥ याहि केसमानभाषाप्रथमेंअर्थनाही ॥ जासकेम
ननकरैभित्तभवकूपही ॥ १॥ मलयछत्रगुणानपुनशब्दोपमानमान ॥ अरथापनिअनुउपलब्धिप्रमानही ॥ मथमअर्थोउजेतिचतुरपंचखदेव
॥ कमहूतेंइनहूकमनसाहियानही ॥ ससमपकासहैंचिकोस्वरूपभन्यो ॥ अथमपकासमपफलचनियानही ॥ बुद्धजनद्वार्याकोकरतवि
रजोई ॥ बुद्धकीमंदिताकरैगोसवहानही ॥ २॥ ॥ सोरवगरीछंद ॥ यहीगुणसारं ॥ रच्योहैआपारं ॥ महादिव्यरूपं ॥ मयोगअनूप ॥ ३॥ ॥ अथ
गप्रयातछंद ॥ ममानंमयालंबडोहोविचार ॥ नहोअसकौनोसभाषामद्वारी ॥ सूरामंत्रिलोकरंदेमइधारी ॥ विरकसुसंतनहोकोविधारी
॥ ४॥ स्रछविनिवेग्योमभैकेमद्वारी ॥ सूरामसृष्टिमयोसोधारी ॥ त्रिकोकुसुगामंयहीवातअर्थ ॥ सुतेजोप्रबंधअनंदसुचारै ॥ ५॥ ॥ चोपाई
॥ परममेमोनायनजानी ॥ लोकाधर्तहैंसंगपछानी ॥ पररपकारदष्टिबहुतेरी ॥ स्वमतबलियेअलपनहोरी ॥ ६॥ संतनगुरुविपनमेंमो
॥ कथाअवनसतसंगतनेमा ॥ तिनदोयननैकियोविचार ॥ शंतमभाकरदेकोसारा ॥ ७॥ सोधनिलषनिविषेदुपमारी ॥ योतेंछपवावनकीधारी ॥
नोकरमिलकरिपथछपायो ॥ बहूतद्वयिननयापल्लयो ॥ ८॥ दसविदेसप्रहतेप्रथा ॥ अधिभितलउहेसुतिकोपथा ॥ गामेंरचोरचरसुभया

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पंडितनिश्चलदास स्वामिन् ॥ सर्वमसुखमोक्षार्थं संपूर्णवेदत्रयीशास्त्रनकासिद्धांतरूपं यद्वहनिष्पाकरनामग्रंथप्रत्यक्षादिममाण
निरूपणपूर्वकरव्याहं सोईग्रंथास्वामिश्रिलोकगामजिकिआज्ञासैं सवनकेदास नारायणजिनिकमजिअँ लीलाधरओधवजी दोनू
पिलके निमले स्वाभिरामसिंगजिकिपास सोधायेके सुंवाईसैं हरीकिण्कदमके आपखनैं लेछुपायेके प्रसिद्धियाहें ॥ ७ ॥

संवत् १९२४ शके १७९ विभवनामसंवत्सरे आश्वीन कृष्ण

१० दशम्यां रविवासरं तारिख ११ वी.

माहि अक्सेसरसन १८६८

यह ग्रंथ सन् १८४७ के २० वा कायदे के अनुसार है।

रजिस्टर कराया हे.॥.

Figure 12: The colophon to the manuscript edition of the VP (Nīśchaladāsa 1868, 8.41).

गुणिं २

मैंसंथाब्रह्मअवगामेशत्रिवैश्वकाअधिकारनहीं। अन्यग्रथकारइसरीतिसे कहें हैं। यद्यपिसंन्यासमेंकेवलब्राह्मणकाअधिकारहै तथापिब्रह्म
अवगामेशत्रिवैश्वकावीअधिकारहै परंतुजनमांतरसंस्कारलेजिसउत्तमपुरुषकूपिषयनमेंदीनतादिकदोषनहींहोंवे ओसेयदिबुद्धवालेहू
संन्यासविनाज्ञानहोवेंहै इसीवास्तेगृहस्थाथममेंहैअनेकराजपिब्रह्मवित्कहेहैं। तिनमेंअन्यग्रथकारइसरीतिसे कहें हैं। जैसेब्रह्मअवग
दि। कनमेंशत्रिवैश्वकाअधिकारहै तैसेसंन्यासमेंपिशात्रियवैश्यकुनिषेधनहीं। औज्ञानकेउदयमेंकेतुत्यभेदबुद्धिकानथाजातिआ

आधिकाङ्क्षुयात्ताहय तथा। पनरद्व। यभात दद्यात् इत्यादकवचनतथादकूउपदशकामनषषह आ। स। य। य। ७। पदशरा। हतउरुषक्र। य। व। प। व। दिकनकाअसम्भवहोनेनेज्ञानाथित्वसम्भवेनेहीनेसेषूद्रकूयज्ञादिकर्मकावीमिवेधहोनेनेविद्योपयोगिकर्मकेआभावसेनेताकाज्ञानहेतुअवर्णमिआधिकारनहीं। यहकिसीपंथकारकामतहेंअन्यग्रथकारोंकायहमतहेंउपनयनपूर्वकैवेदकाआध्ययनकह्याहें औशूद्रकाउपनयनकह्यानहीं। यांतैवेदअवर्णमैनेशूद्रकाअधिकारनहींहें तथापिआवयच्चतुरोवर्णाचूइत्यादिकवचननेइंमिहासपुराणादिकनकेअ

(next page)

३८ बुद्धि.

वर्णमें शूद्र का भी अधिकार है औ पूर्व उक्त वचनमें शूद्र कुंड पदेश कानि बंध क ह्मा है ना काय ह्म अधिकार है वैदिक मंत्र संहित यज्ञादिक कर्म उपदेश शूद्र कुंड न हीं करैतें से वैदिक माणदिक स गुण उपलब्धना का शूद्र कुंड पदेश न हीं करैतें उ पदेश मात्र कानि बंधन हीं जो उ पदेश मात्र कानि बंधन हीं वैदिक धर्म शास्त्र में शूद्र जातिके धर्म कानि रूप एणिष्कृत होवेगा औ विद्यो पयोगिक कर्म के अभावें जो विद्यो में अंध निधिकार करैतें तो काय ह्म समाधान है साधारण असाधारण सब कर्म न कानि द्योमें उ पयोग है औ सत्य अस्तेय क्षमा शौच दान विषयों विमुख वसा भाग वत नामोच्चारण तीर्थ स्नान पंचाहार संवरा जादिक न कान पद त्यादिक स कल वणिके साधारण धर्म में मत था शूद्र कर्म ला करोक्त चतुर्थ वर्ण के असाधारण धर्म में शूद्र का अधिकार है तिन कर्म न के अस्नान वैद्युत न वैद्युत करण की शताद्वारा विद्या की प्राप्ति संभव है या तें इति हास्युपाणादि कर्म के अवरणें विवेकादिक न के संभवें शूद्र कुंड विज्ञानाधिहीन नैं वैदिक भिन्न अध्यात्म ग्रंथ न के अवरणानादिक न में शूद्र का भी अधिकार है औ भाष्यकार नैं ची मयमाध्याय के चतुर्थ पाद में यह क ह्मा है उपनयन पूर्व के वद का अध्याय न क ह्मा है औ शूद्र कुंड उपनयन के अभाव नैं यह विवेद में अधिकार न हीं तथापि उपाणादिक अवरणें शूद्र कुंड विज्ञान होय जावे तो ज्ञान सभ काल ही शूद्र का भी प्राप्ति बंधन न मोक्ष होवै है इ सरा नैं से भाष्यकार के वचन नैं वैदिक भिन्न ज्ञान हेतु अध्यात्म ग्रंथ न के अवरणें शूद्र का अधिकार है औ ज्ञान चतसंस्कार तें अत्यजादिक न के बीजिज्ञासा होय जावे तो रुच्य वचन नैं तिन का भी ज्ञान होय के कार्य सहित अधिकांश निवृत्ति रूप मोक्ष होवै है या तें देव अमुष्मन् की नाई स कलम मुख्य कुंतल ज्ञान का अधिकार है आत्म स्वरूप के यथायथा ज्ञान कुंतल ज्ञान क ह्मा है आत्मा हीन को ई शरीर होवै तो ज्ञान का अध्यापिका र होंगे या तें आत्मा ज्ञान की सामर्थ्य मनुष्य मात्र में है परंतु जाशरीर में देवी स पदा होवे वा कुंतल ज्ञान होवै है आसुरी संपद में तत्त्व ज्ञान होवे न हीं औ सर्व भूत नैं देव आत्मा सत्य आर्जव संतोषादिक देवी संपदा का सभ ब्राह्मण में है औ क्षत्रिय का प्रजापालनार्थ प्रवर्तित धर्म हो नैं तो ब्राह्मण में

Figure 13: The text presented in Appendix 2 (A2.2), (Niśchaladāsa 1868, 8.27-8).
(Grayed-out text is not considered in Appendix 2)

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वृत्तिप्रभाकर ।

स्थाविशेष निद्रा है. काहेतैं? आवरणविक्षेपशक्तियुक्तता अज्ञानका लक्षण
 है. औ स्वप्नकालमें जाग्रत् द्रष्टा दृश्यका आवरण अनुभवसिद्ध है. देवदत्त-
 नाम ब्राह्मणजाति जाग्रत्कालमें पितापितामहादिकनके मरणतैं उत्तर दाह
 श्राद्धादि करिकै धनपुत्रादिसंपदासहित सो बना हुआ आत्माकूं यज्ञदत्तनाम
 क्षत्रिय जाति बाल्यावस्थाविशिष्ट अन्नवस्त्रके अलाभतैं क्षुधाशीतसैं पीडित
 हुवा स्वपितापितामहके अंकमें रोदनकर्ता अनुभव करै है. तहां जाग्रत्
 कालके व्यावहारिकद्रष्टादृश्यका मूलाज्ञानसैं आवरणकहैं तौ जाग्रत्कालमेंभी
 तिनका आवरण हुवा चाहिये, अन्य कोई आवरणकर्ता प्रतीत होवै नहीं;
 यातैं स्वप्नकालमें निद्राही आवरण करै है. औ स्वप्नके पदार्थाकार
 परिणामभी निद्राकाही होवै है. इसरीतिसैं आवरणविक्षेपशक्तिविशिष्ट
 निद्रा है, यातैं अज्ञान लक्षण निद्रामें होनेतैं अज्ञानकी अवस्थाविशेष
 निद्रा है परंतु अवस्थाज्ञान सादि है. काहेतैं ? मूलाज्ञानही आगंतुक
 आकारविशिष्ट हुवा किंचित् उपाध्यवच्छिन्न चेतनका आवरण करै ताकूं
 अवस्था अज्ञान और तूला अज्ञान कहैं हैं. इसरीतिसैं आगंतुक आकार-
 विशिष्ट होनेतैं अवस्थाज्ञान सादि है ताकी उत्पत्तिमें निमित्तकारण जाग्र-
 दोगहेतु कर्मनका उपराम है औ मूलाज्ञानकाही आकार विशेष होनेतैं
 मूलाज्ञान उपादानकारण है निद्रारूप अवस्थाज्ञानसे आवृत व्यावहारिक
 द्रष्टामें प्रातिभासिक द्रष्टा अध्यस्त है. तिस निद्रासे आवृत व्यावहारिक
 दृश्यमें प्रातिभासिक दृश्य अध्यस्त है; यातैं प्रातिभासिक द्रष्टाका अधिष्ठान
 व्यावहारिक द्रष्टा है, औ प्रातिभासिक दृश्यका अधिष्ठान व्यावहारिक दृश्य-
 है; भोगके अभिमुख कर्म होवै तब जाग्रत् होवै है, तिसकालमें ब्रह्मज्ञान
 रहित पुरुषनकूं भी व्यावहारिक द्रष्टादृश्यका ज्ञानही अधिष्ठानका ज्ञान है
 तासैं अवस्थाज्ञानरूप उपादानकी निवृत्तिद्वारा प्रातिभासिक द्रष्टादृश्यकी
 निवृत्ति होवै है. व्यावहारिक द्रष्टाके ज्ञानतैं प्रातिभासिक द्रष्टाकी
 औ व्यावहारिक दृश्यके ज्ञानतैं प्रातिभासिक दृश्यकी निवृत्ति होवै है.

Figure 14: An example of the errors found in the KS edition, VP 8.57, 384.

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वृत्तिप्रभाकर ।

अधिकारीकू निर्गुणब्रह्माकार निरंतर वृत्तिरूप उपासना कर्तव्य है, सोई प्रसंख्यान है, तैसैं उत्तम अधिकारीकूभी मननसैं उत्तर निदिध्यासनरूप प्रसंख्यानही ब्रह्मसाक्षात्कारका करण है। यद्यपि षड्विधप्रमाणमें प्रसंख्यानके अभावतैं ताकू प्रमाकी करणता संभवै नहीं; तथापि सगुणब्रह्मके ध्यानकू सगुण ब्रह्मके साक्षात्कारकी करणता औ निर्गुण ब्रह्मके ध्यानकू निर्गुण ब्रह्मके साक्षात्कारकी करणता सकल श्रुतिस्मृतिमें प्रसिद्ध है। तैसैं व्यवहितकामिनीके प्रसंख्यानकू कामिनीके साक्षात्कारकी करणता लोकमें प्रसिद्ध है; यातैं निदिध्यासनरूप प्रसंख्यानभी ब्रह्मसाक्षात्कारका करण संभवै है, यद्यपि प्रसंख्यानजन्य ब्रह्मज्ञानकू प्रमाणजन्यताके अभावतैं प्रमात्वका संभव है; तथापि संवादिभ्रमकी नाई विषयके अबाधतैं प्रमात्व संभवै है। औ निदिध्यासनरूप प्रसंख्यानका मूल शब्दप्रमाण है; यातैं भी ब्रह्मज्ञानकू प्रमात्व संभवै है।

भामतीकार वाचस्पतिके मतमें प्रसंख्यानकू मनकी सहकारिता औ मनकू ब्रह्मज्ञानकी कारणता ॥ १२४ ॥

भामतीकार वाचस्पतिका यह मत है:—मनका सहकारी प्रसंख्यान है, ब्रह्मज्ञानका करण मन है, प्रसंख्यानकू ज्ञानकी कारणता अप्रसिद्ध है, सगुण निर्गुण ब्रह्मका ध्यानभी मनका सहकारी है, तिनके साक्षात्कारका करण ध्यान नहीं; किंतु मनही करण है, तैसैं व्यवहित कामिनीका ध्यानभी कामिनी साक्षात्कारका करण नहीं; किंतु कामिनीचितनसहित मनही ताके साक्षात्कारका करण है, याप्रकारतैं मनही ब्रह्मज्ञानका करण है।

अद्वैतग्रंथका मुख्यमत (एकाग्रतासहित मनकू सहकारिता और वेदांतवाक्यरूप शब्दकू ब्रह्मज्ञानकी कारणता) ॥ १२५ ॥

औ अद्वैतग्रंथनका मुख्य मत यह है:—वाक्यजन्य ज्ञानतैं अनंतर प्रसंख्यानकी अपेक्षा नहीं; किंतु महावाक्यतैं ही अद्वैत ब्रह्मका साक्षा-

Figure 15: An example of the errors found in the KS edition, VP 8.123-5, 418.

जीवेश्वरवृत्तिप्रयोजननिवृत्ति नि०-प्र० ८. (४११)

पापकी निवृत्ति होवैहै, औ श्रवणका अंग संन्यास है; यापक्षमेंभी ब्राह्मणके श्रवणका अंग संन्यास है, क्षत्रियवैश्यके श्रवणका अंग नहीं; किंतु फला-भिलाषारहित क्रोधादि दोषरहित ईश्वरार्पण बुद्धिसँ स्ववर्णाश्रमधर्मके अनुष्ठान सहित कर्मके अवकाशकालमें श्रवणतैही क्षत्रियवैश्यकूं ज्ञान होवैहै. सर्वथा विद्याके उपयोगी कर्ममें औ श्रवणमें क्षत्रियवैश्यकाभी अधिकार है. काहेतै—ब्राह्मणकी नाई ज्ञानार्थित्व क्षत्रियवैश्यकूंभी सम है, औ फलार्थीका साधनमें अधिकार होवैहै, यातैं आत्मकाम क्षत्रियवैश्यका वेदांतश्रवणमें अधिकार है.

किसी ग्रंथकारके मतमें शूद्रकूं श्रवणमें अधिकार ॥१०८॥

यद्यपि मनुष्यमात्रकूं आत्मकामनाका संभव होनेतैं क्षत्रियवैश्यकी नाई ज्ञानार्थित्वके सद्भावतैं शूद्रकूंभी उक्तीतिसें वेदांतश्रवणका अधिकार हुया चाहिये:—तथापि “न शूद्राय मतिं दद्यात्” इत्यादिक वचनतैं शूद्रकूं उप-देशका निषेध है और सर्वथा उपदेशरहित पुरुषकूं विवेकादिकनका असंभव होनेतैं ज्ञानार्थित्व संभवै नहीं. तैसैं शूद्रकूं यज्ञादिकर्मकाभी निषेध होनेतैं विद्योपयोगिकर्मके अभावतैं ताका ज्ञानहेतु श्रवणमें अधिकार नहीं यह किसी ग्रंथकारका मत है.

अन्यग्रंथकारनकी रीतिसें शूद्रकाभी वेदभिन्नपुराणइति-

हासादिरूप अध्यात्मग्रंथनके श्रवणादिकमें अधिकार ॥ १०९ ॥

अन्य ग्रंथकारोंका यह मत है:—उपनयनपूर्वक वेदका अध्ययन कहा है औ शूद्रका उपनयन कहा नहीं; यातैं वेदश्रवणमें तौ शूद्रका अधिकार नहीं है, तथापि “श्रावयेच्चतुरो वर्णान्” इत्यादिक वचनतैं इतिहासपुराणा-दिकनके श्रवणमें शूद्रकाभी अधिकार है. औ पूर्व उक्त वचनमें शूद्रकूं उपदेशका निषेध कहा है ताका यह अभिप्राय है:—वैदिक मंत्रसहित यज्ञा-दिक कर्मोपदेश शूद्रकूं नहीं करै, तैसैं वेदोक्त प्राणादिक सगुणउपासनाका

Figure 16: The text presented in Appendix 2 (A2.3), pt. 1 (Nīścaldās 1899, VP 8.109-10, 411).

(४१२)

वृत्तिप्रभाकर ।

शूद्रकूं उपदेश नहीं करै, उपदेशमात्रका निषेध नहीं. जो उपदेशमात्रका निषेध होवै तौ धर्मशास्त्रमें शूद्रजातिके धर्मका निरूपण निष्फल होवैगा. औ विद्योपयोगि कर्मके अभावतैं जो विद्यामें अनधिकार कहैं हैं. ताका यह समाधान है—साधारण असाधारण सकल शुभकर्मनका विद्यामें उपयोग है. औ सत्य, अस्तेय, क्षमा, शौच, दान, विषयतैं विमुखता, भगवत्नामोच्चारण, तीर्थस्नान, पंचाक्षरमंत्रराजादिकनका जप, इत्यादिक सकल वर्णके साधारण धर्मनमें तथा शूद्रकमलाकरोक्त चतुर्वर्णके असाधारण धर्मनमें शूद्रका अधिकार है, तिनकर्मनके अनुष्ठानतैं अन्तःकरणकी शुद्धिद्वारा विद्याकी प्राप्ति संभवै है; यातैं इतिहास पुराणादिकनके श्रवणतैं विवेकादिकनके संभवतैं शूद्रकूंभी ज्ञानार्थित्व होनेतैं वेदभिन्न अध्यात्मग्रंथनके श्रवणादिकनमें शूद्रकाभी अधिकार है. औ भाष्यकारनैंभी प्रथमाध्यायके तृतीयपादमें यह कह्या है:—उपनयनपूर्वक वेदका अध्ययन कह्या है; औ शूद्रकूं उपनयनके अभावतैं यद्यपि वेदमें अधिकार नहीं, है, तथापि पुराणादिक श्रवणतैं शूद्रकूंभी ज्ञान होय जावै तौ ज्ञानसमकालही शूद्रकाभी प्रतिबंधरहित मोक्ष होवैहै. इसरीतिसैं भाष्यकारके वचनतैंभी वेदभिन्न ज्ञानहेतु अध्यात्मग्रंथनके श्रवणमें शूद्रका अधिकार है.

मनुष्यमात्रकूं भक्ति औ ज्ञानका अधिकार

अंत्यजादिमनुष्यनकूं तत्त्वज्ञानका अधिकार ॥११०॥

जन्मांतर संस्कारतैं अंत्यजादिकनकूंभी जिज्ञासा होय जावै तौ पौरुषेयवचनतैं तिनकोभी ज्ञान होयकै कार्यसहित अविद्याकी निवृत्तिरूप मोक्ष होवै है, यातैं देवअसुरनकी नाई सकलमनुष्यनकूं तत्त्वज्ञानका अधिकार है. आत्मस्वरूपके यथार्थ ज्ञानकूं तत्त्वज्ञान कहैं हैं. आत्महीन कोई शरीर होवै तौ ज्ञानका अनधिकार होवै, यातैं आत्मज्ञानकी सामर्थ्य मनुष्यमात्रमें है, परन्तु:—

Figure 17: The text presented in Appendix 2 (A2.3), pt. 2 (Nīśāldās 1899, VP 8.109-10, 412).

५७६ श्रीशुद्धिप्रभाकर
 ५७७ प्रकाश ८ : अंक १०७-१०८

विदेश-उपदेशका निषेध किया गया है। इसके साथ ही उपदेश-रहित पुरुषार्थमें विवेकादिकोंका सर्वथा असम्भव होनेसे उनमें ज्ञानार्थत्व भी सम्भव नहीं होता। इसी प्रकार शूद्रोंके लिये यज्ञादिक कर्मका भी निषेध होनेसे और इसके फलस्वरूप उनमें विद्योपयोगी कर्मके अभावसे ज्ञानहेतु श्रवणमें भी उनकी अधिकार नहीं है। ऐसा किसी ग्रन्थकारका मत है।

१०७ : अन्य ग्रन्थकारोंकी रीतिसे वेदभिन्न पुराण-इतिहासादिरूप अध्यात्म ग्रन्थोंके श्रवणादिकमें शूद्रका भी अधिकार

अन्य ग्रन्थकारोंका ऐसा मत है कि उपनयनपूर्वक ही वेदाध्ययन कहा गया है, परन्तु शूद्रके लिये तो उपनयनकी विधि ही नहीं है। इसलिये यद्यपि वेदश्रवणमें तो शूद्रका अधिकार नहीं है; तथापि 'श्रावयेच्चतुरो वर्णान्' (चारों वर्णोंको श्रवण कराना चाहिये) इत्यादिक वचनोंसे इतिहास-पुराणादिकोंके श्रवणमें तो शूद्रका भी अधिकार है। तथा पूर्वोक्त वचनमें जो शूद्रको उपदेशका निषेध किया गया है, उसका अभिप्राय यही है कि शूद्रको वैदिक मंत्रोंसहित यज्ञादिक कर्मोंका उपदेश अथवा वेदोक्त प्राणादिक सगुण उपासनाका उपदेश नहीं करना चाहिये, परन्तु वहाँ उपदेशमात्रका निषेध नहीं किया गया है। यदि उपदेशमात्रका निषेध माना जाय तो धर्मशास्त्रमें शूद्र जातिके धर्मका जो निरूपण है वह निष्फल होगा। विद्योपयोगी कर्मके अभावसे शूद्रका जो विद्यामें अनधिकार कहा गया है, उसका समाधान यह है—

साधारण-असाधारण यावत् शुभ कर्मोंका विद्यामें ही उपयोग है। अर्थात् सत्य, अस्तेय, क्षमा, शौच, दान, विषयोंसे

जन्मान्तरके संस्कारोंसे यदि अंत्यजादिकोंको भी जिज्ञासा हो जाय तो पौरुषेय वचनसे उनको भी ज्ञान होकर कार्यसहित अविद्याकी निवृत्तिरूप मोक्ष हो जाता है। इसलिये देव व असुरोंके समान सभी मनुष्योंको तत्त्वज्ञानका अधिकार है। आत्मस्वरूपके यथार्थ ज्ञानको तत्त्वज्ञान कहते हैं। यदि कोई शरीर आत्महीन हो तो उसे ज्ञानका अनधिकार कहा जाय, इसलिये आत्मज्ञानकी सामर्थ्य तो मनुष्यमात्रमें ही है।

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१०८ : मनुष्यमात्रको भक्ति और ज्ञानका अधिकार तथा अंत्यजादि मनुष्योंको भी तत्त्वज्ञानका अधिकार

इस प्रकार श्रीभाग्यकारके वचनोंसे भी शूद्रका वेदभिन्न ज्ञानहेतु अध्यात्म ग्रन्थोंके श्रवणमें अधिकार है।

Figure 18: The text presented in Appendix 2 (A2.4), pt. 1 (Nīścaldās 1957, 576-7).

१०७ : अन्य ग्रन्थकारोंकी रीतिसे वेदभिन्न पुराण- इतिहासारूप अध्यात्म ग्रन्थोंके श्रवणादिमें

शूद्रका भी अधिकार

अन्य ग्रन्थकारोंका ऐसा मत है कि उपनयनपूर्वक ही वेदाध्ययन कहा गया है, परन्तु शूद्रके लिये तो उपनयनकी विधि ही नहीं है। इसलिये यद्यपि वेदश्रवणमें तो शूद्रका अधिकार नहीं है; तथापि 'श्रावयेच्चतुरो वर्णान्' (चारों वर्णोंको श्रवण कराना चाहिये) इत्यादि वचनोंसे इतिहास-पुराणादिके श्रवणमें तो शूद्रका भी अधिकार है तथा पूर्वोक्त वचनमें जो शूद्रको उपदेशका निषेध किया गया है, उसका अभिप्राय यही है कि शूद्रको वैदिक मंत्रोंसहित यज्ञादि कर्मोंका उपदेश अथवा वेदोक्त प्राणादि समुण उपासनाका उपदेश नहीं करना चाहिये, परन्तु वहाँ उपदेशमात्रका निषेध नहीं किया गया है। यदि उपदेशमात्रका निषेध माना जाय तो धर्मशास्त्रमें शूद्र जातिके धर्मका जो निरूपण है वह निष्फल होगा। विद्योपयोगी कर्मके अभावसे शूद्रका जो विद्या में अनधिकार कहा गया है, उसका समाधान यह है—

साधारण-असाधारण यावत् शुभ कर्मोंका विद्यामें ही उपयोग है। अर्थात् सत्य, अस्तेय, क्षमा, शौच, दान, विषयोसे विमुखता, भगवन्ना-मोच्चारण, तीर्थस्नान, पञ्चाक्षर मन्त्रराजादिका जप—इत्यादि जो सभी वर्णोंके साधारण धर्म हैं और शूद्रकमलाकरके वचनोंके अनुसार चतुर्थ वर्णके असाधारण धर्म हैं, उनमें तो शूद्रका भी अधिकार है। उन कर्मोंके अनुष्ठानसे शूद्रको भी अन्तःकरणकी शुद्धिद्वारा विद्याकी प्राप्ति सम्भव होती है। इस प्रकार इतिहास-पुराणादिके श्रवणसे शूद्रमें विवेकादिका सम्भव होता है, विवेकादिसे ज्ञानार्थत्व सम्भव होता है और फिर ज्ञानार्थत्वसे वेदभिन्न अध्यात्म ग्रन्थोंके श्रवणद्वारा विद्याकी प्राप्ति सम्भव होती है। श्रीभाष्यकारने भी ब्रह्मसूत्र प्रथमाध्यायके

तृतीय पादमें ऐसा कथन किया है—'उपनयनपूर्वक ही वेदाध्ययनका अधिकार है, परन्तु शूद्रको उपनयनके अभावसे यद्यपि उसका वेदमें तो अधिकार नहीं है; तथापि पुराणादिके श्रवणसे ही यदि उसे ज्ञान हो जाय तो ज्ञानसमकाल ही उसका भी प्रतिबन्धरहित मोक्ष हो जाता है।'।

इस प्रकार श्रीभाष्यकारके वचनोंसे भी शूद्रका वेदभिन्न ज्ञानहेतु अध्यात्म ग्रन्थोंके श्रवणमें अधिकार है।

१०८ : मनुष्यमात्रको भक्ति और ज्ञानका अधिकार तथा अंत्यजादि मनुष्योंको भी तत्त्वज्ञानका अधिकार

जन्मान्तरके संस्कारोंसे यदि अंत्यजादिको भी जिज्ञासा हो जाय तो पौरुषेय वचनसे उनको भी ज्ञान होकर कार्यसहित अविद्याकी निवृत्ति-रूप मोक्ष हो जाता है। इसलिये वेद व असुरोंके समान सभी मनुष्योंको तत्त्वज्ञानका अधिकार है। आत्मस्वरूपके यथार्थ ज्ञानको तत्त्वज्ञान कहते हैं। यदि कोई शरीर आत्महीन हो तो उसे ज्ञानका अनधिकार कहा जाय, इसलिये आत्मज्ञानकी सामर्थ्य तो मनुष्यमात्रमें ही है।

१०९ : तत्त्वज्ञानमें देवीसम्पदाकी अपेक्षापूर्वक मनुष्य- मात्रके लिये भगवद्भक्ति और तत्त्वज्ञानके अधिकारका निर्धार

जिस शरीरमें देवीसम्पदाका निवास हो उसीको तत्त्वज्ञानकी प्राप्ति होती है, आसुरी सम्पदामें कदापि नहीं। सर्वभूतोंमें दया, क्षमा, सत्य, आर्जव और संतोषादि देवीसम्पदाका सम्भव तो ब्राह्मणमें ही है। क्षत्रिय-का प्रजापालनार्थ प्रवृत्ति-धर्म होनेसे उसमें ब्राह्मणसे किञ्चित् न्यून देवीसम्पदा हो सकती है और धर्मबुद्धिसे प्रजासंरक्षणार्थ कुछ प्राणीको हिंसा भी अहिंसा ही होती है, इसलिये उसमें देवीसम्पदाका सम्भव नहीं। यद्यपि वैश्यका शारीरिक कृषिवणिज्यादि व्यापार क्षत्रियसे भी अधिक होनेसे और उसे आत्मविचारमें अवकाशका असम्भव होनेसे उसे

Glossary

This is a collection of salient Sanskrit or Hindi terms frequently used in this dissertation. In the spirit of Nīścaldās, for ease of use, the terms are given in the alphabetical order of today's vernacular, namely, English.

<i>abādhita</i>	unsublatable, uncontradicted
<i>abhāva</i>	non-existence
<i>abheda sambandha</i>	identity relation
<i>abheda-</i> <i>samānādhikarāṇya</i>	identity coordination
<i>abhivyaṅgya</i>	that which is manifested
<i>abhivyañjaka</i>	that which manifests, "manifester"
<i>ādhāra</i>	locus, basis
<i>adharma</i>	unrighteousness, injustice, bad conduct, demerit
<i>adhikāra</i>	prerequisite, eligibility
<i>adhikaraṇa</i>	substratum; section (in the context of <i>BS</i>)
<i>adhikārī</i>	one who is eligible
<i>adhiṣṭhāna</i>	substratum
<i>adhyāsa</i>	superimposition
<i>ādhyātmika</i>	spiritual
<i>adr̥ṣṭa</i>	unseen potentiality
<i>advaita</i>	non-duality
<i>advaitin</i>	one who subscribes to the <i>advaita</i> view
<i>āgantuka</i>	adventitious
<i>agnihotra</i>	fire sacrifice, a Vedic ritual
<i>ahaṅkāra</i>	"I"-sense, ego
<i>ajahal-lakṣaṇā</i>	inclusive implication
<i>ajñāna</i>	ignorance
<i>akhaṇḍa</i>	impartite, undivided
<i>akhārā</i>	center, a place where holy persons (<i>sādhūs</i>) assemble
<i>akhyāti-vāda</i>	the theory that the erroneous cognition is the failure to distinguish between the real recollection and real substratum
<i>alaukika</i>	extraordinary, superhuman
<i>āloka</i>	sight
<i>aṁśa</i>	portion, which is without size and indivisible
<i>ānanda</i>	happiness, joy
<i>ānandamaya-kośa</i>	sheath of happiness
<i>anavasthā</i>	infinite regress
<i>aneka-jīva-vāda</i>	the doctrine that there are multiple <i>jīvas</i>
<i>anirvacanīya</i>	logically undefined, neither absolutely real nor empirically false

<i>anirvacanīya-khyāti-vāda</i>	the Advaita theory that the object of erroneous cognition is logically indeterminate
<i>antaḥ-karaṇa</i>	inner-organ, comprising of <i>buddhi</i> , <i>manas</i> , <i>ahankāra</i> , and <i>cit</i>
<i>antya-jāti</i>	lowest caste
<i>anumāna</i>	inference
<i>anupalabdhi</i>	non-cognition
<i>anuvyavasāya</i>	after-cognition, reflexive cognition
<i>anuyogin</i>	correlate, subjunct, locus; see n. 379
<i>anyathā-khyāti-vāda</i>	the theory that the object of erroneous cognition is real, but is present elsewhere
<i>anyathā-siddha</i>	dispensable antecedent
<i>aparokṣa</i>	immediate
<i>āpatti</i>	shortcoming
<i>apramā</i>	indirect; see n. 304
<i>apramātvā</i>	invalidity
<i>aprasiddha</i>	uncommon
<i>apurūṣārthatā</i>	the absence of human pursuits, primarily liberation (<i>puruṣārtha</i>)
<i>apūrva</i>	unseen consequences of actions
<i>ārjava</i>	honesty/uprightness
<i>āropa</i>	factitious supposition
<i>artha</i>	material wealth
<i>arthāpatti</i>	postulation
<i>asamavāyī kāraṇa</i>	non-inherent cause
<i>asat / asad</i>	unreal
<i>asat-khyāti-vāda</i>	the theory that the object of erroneous cognition is unreal
<i>āśrama</i>	stage of life; monastery
<i>āśrama-karma</i>	duties associated with a particular stage of life
<i>āśraya</i>	locus
<i>ativyāpti</i>	over-pervasion (in logic)
<i>ātmā</i>	self; see discussion on p. 124
<i>ātma-khyāti-vāda</i>	the theory that the object of erroneous cognition is a mental state projected by the self
<i>avabhāsa</i>	apparent cognition
<i>avacchedakatā sambandha</i>	delimiting relation
<i>avāntara vākya</i>	subsidiary Upaniṣadic statement
<i>āvaraṇa</i>	concealment, i.e., ignorance
<i>avasthā-ajñāna</i>	secondary ignorance
<i>avayava</i>	part, which is measurable and divisible
<i>avidyā</i>	ignorance
<i>avyākṛta</i>	the form of macrocosm during the deep sleep state

<i>ayathārtha</i>	false
<i>bādha</i>	negation
<i>bādha-</i> <i>samānādhikarāṇya</i>	negated grammatical co-ordination
<i>bādhita</i>	negated, contradicted
<i>bhāga-tyāga-lakṣaṇā</i>	inclusive-and-exclusive implication
<i>bhakti</i>	devotion
<i>bhāṣā</i>	vernacular
<i>bhāva-rūpa</i>	positive; having the appearance of existence
<i>bhrama</i>	erroneous notion
Brahman	the undifferentiated, indivisible ground of all being
brahman	the priestly caste, one of the three “twice-born” castes (Skt. <i>brāhmaṇa</i> , H. <i>brāhman</i>)
<i>brahmāṇḍa</i>	universe
<i>buddhi</i>	intellect
<i>cāṇḍāla</i> / <i>caṇḍāla</i>	untouchable, an outcaste, born of a śūdra father and a brahman mother
<i>cetana</i>	consciousness
<i>cit</i>	consciousness
<i>citta</i>	consciousness
Dādūpanthī	a follower of the Dādū Panth, the way of Dādū Dayāl
<i>daivī-sampadā</i>	divine properties
<i>darśan</i>	viewing
<i>darśana</i>	a system of Hindu philosophy
<i>dayā</i>	compassion
<i>ḍerā</i>	camp, quarters
<i>dharma</i> (1)	duty, morality, (religious) merit, good conduct, righteousness, ethics
<i>dharma</i> (2)	property, quality, attribute
<i>dharmi-jñāna</i>	substantive cognition
<i>dharmīn</i> / <i>dharmī</i>	property-possessor, property-qualified object
<i>digvijaya</i>	“conquest of the four quarters,” triumphant travels
<i>dohā</i>	a rhyming couplet
<i>doṣa</i>	defect
<i>dravya</i>	substance
<i>dr̥ṣṭi-sr̥ṣṭi-vāda</i>	the doctrine that perception is creation
<i>eka-jīva-vāda</i>	the doctrine that there is only one <i>jīva</i>
<i>gaddī</i>	center (lit. seat)

<i>gauṇī-vṛtti</i>	subsidiary significatory relation
<i>gaurava</i>	lack of economy, undue complexity (in a syllogism)
<i>guṇa</i>	quality; the three attributes <i>sattva</i> , <i>rajas</i> and <i>tamas</i>
<i>guru</i>	teacher
<i>gurudvāra</i>	teacher's residence
<i>hetu</i>	reason, probans = <i>linga</i>
<i>hiranyagarbha</i>	the form of macrocosm during the dream state
<i>homa</i>	ritual oblation, offering, usually of clarified butter
<i>indriya</i>	sense organ
<i>Īśvara</i>	the theistic creator
<i>itihāsa</i>	historical texts, including the <i>Rāmāyaṇa</i> and <i>MBh</i>
<i>jagat</i>	world
<i>jahad-ajahal-lakṣaṇā</i>	inclusive-and-exclusive implication
<i>jahal-lakṣaṇā</i>	exclusive implication
<i>jāti</i>	caste
<i>jīva</i>	individual, living being
<i>jīvan-mukta</i>	one who is liberated while alive
<i>jīvan-mukti</i>	the attainment of liberation while living
<i>jñāna</i>	knowledge, cognition
<i>jñāna-lakṣaṇa</i>	relation to the here and now of the features of a thing which was known previously at another place and time
<i>jñātatā</i>	cognized-ness, known-ness, being known
<i>jñātatva</i>	known-ness, cognized-ness, being known
<i>kalpa</i>	time period equivalent to 4,320,000,000 years
<i>kāma</i>	pleasure
<i>kāmya-karma</i>	optional acts
<i>karaṇa</i>	instrument
<i>karma</i>	action
<i>kartṛtva</i>	agency
<i>khāṇḍān</i>	family, dynasty
<i>khyāti-vāda</i>	theory of error
<i>kośa</i>	sheath
<i>kṣamā</i>	forbearance
<i>kṣatriya</i>	warrior caste
<i>kṣobha</i>	perturbation
<i>kūṭastha</i>	immutable consciousness (lit. “that which is located at the peak”)

<i>lāghava</i>	economy (in a syllogism)
<i>lakṣaṇa</i>	inherent nature
<i>lakṣaṇā-vṛtti</i>	indirect/implied signification
<i>laukika</i>	ordinary
<i>liṅga</i>	sign, probans = <i>hetu</i>
<i>mahant</i>	religious head
<i>mahā-vākya</i>	great Upaniṣadic statement; see n. 343
<i>mala</i>	impurity
<i>manana</i>	reflection on the content of canonical Vedānta texts; accompanied by <i>śravaṇa</i> and <i>nididhyāsana</i> ; see n. 160
<i>manas</i>	mind
<i>māyā</i>	indeterminate and ultimately unreal creative power that manifests the empirical world
<i>mithyā</i>	unreal, illusory
<i>mithyātva</i>	unreality, illusoriness
<i>mokṣa</i>	liberation
<i>mukhya-</i>	principal (grammatical) coordination
<i>samānādhikarāṇya</i>	
<i>mūlājñāna</i>	primary/primordial ignorance
<i>mumukṣu</i>	seeker of liberation
<i>nididhyāsana</i>	profound and continuous meditation on the content of canonical Vedānta texts; accompanied by <i>śravaṇa</i> and <i>manana</i> ; see nn. 161, 582
<i>nimitta kāraṇa</i>	efficient cause
<i>niravayava</i>	undivided
<i>nitya-karma</i>	obligatory ritual acts
<i>nivṛtti</i>	negation, cessation, involution, refraining from activity, withdrawal (see discussion on p. 210)
<i>Nyāya</i>	A school of Indian Philosophy, logical realism
<i>pādukā</i>	wooden sandals
<i>pakṣa</i>	locus where the <i>liṅga/hetu</i> (probans) is perceived
<i>pāpa</i>	demerits, “sin.” See n. 564
<i>parāmarśa</i>	recollection
<i>pāramārthika</i>	ultimate, absolute
<i>parokṣa</i>	mediate
<i>pradhāna</i>	primordial (inert) matter which constitutes creation, = <i>prakṛti</i>
<i>prāgabhāva</i>	prior non-existence
<i>prajā</i>	subjects (of a king)

<i>prājñā</i>	the form of <i>jīva</i> during the deep sleep state
<i>prakaraṇa-grantha</i>	independent treatise
<i>prakṛti</i>	primordial inert matter which constitutes creation, = <i>pradhāna</i>
<i>pramā</i>	valid/direct cognition; see n. 304
<i>pramāṇa</i>	means of valid cognition
<i>pramātā</i>	cognizer
<i>pramātvā</i>	validity
<i>prapañca</i>	the visible, empirical world; apparent/material creation
<i>prārabdha karma</i>	past accumulated actions [and their results]
<i>prasaṅkhyāna</i>	continuous meditation
<i>pratibandhakābhāva</i>	absence of obstacles
<i>prātibhāsika</i>	illusory
<i>pratiyogin</i>	counter-correlate, adjunct, counterpositive, absentee; see n. 379
<i>pratyabhijñā</i>	re-cognition
<i>pratyakṣa</i>	(immediate) perception; see n. 386
<i>prauḍhi-vāda</i>	(temporary) acceptance of the opponents' view while refuting their objections to one's own view. See n. 486
<i>pravṛtti</i>	inclination, activity, effort towards some end, active involvement with the world; see discussion on p. 210
<i>puṇya</i>	merit
<i>purāṇa</i>	sacred texts containing stories, legends, hymns and instructions of various deities, sages and kings
<i>puruṣārtha</i>	the human pursuits, namely, <i>dharma</i> (1), <i>artha</i> , <i>kāma</i> , <i>mokṣa</i>
<i>pūrva-pakṣa</i>	prima-facie view
<i>rājā</i>	king
<i>rajas</i>	the attribute of activity, passion; see <i>guṇa</i>
Ram	<i>nirguṇa</i> Brahman
<i>śabda</i>	verbal testimony
<i>sādhana</i>	means
<i>sādhū</i>	monk, ascetic
<i>sādhya</i>	probandum, the term to be proven
<i>śākhā</i>	branch, school
<i>sākṣātkāra</i>	immediate cognition
<i>sākṣī</i>	witness (consciousness)
<i>śakti</i>	power, capacity
<i>śakti-vṛtti</i>	direct signficatory relation
<i>samānādhikarāṇya</i>	grammatical coordination
<i>sāmānya</i>	general characteristic
<i>sāmānya-jñāna</i>	general cognition

<i>samavāya</i>	inherence
<i>samavāyī kāraṇa</i>	inherent cause
<i>sambandhin</i>	relatum
<i>samīcīna</i>	proper
<i>saṃsāra</i>	empirical existence, cycle of birth-living-death-rebirth; see n. 551
<i>saṃskāra</i>	residual trace, impression, tendency. Also, purifying ceremony (In a ritual context)
<i>saṃyoga</i>	contact
<i>sannyāsa</i>	renunciation
<i>sant</i>	holy man, religious teacher; see n. 101
<i>santoṣa</i>	contentment
<i>sāra</i>	essence
<i>śāstra</i>	scripture
<i>sat / sad</i>	existence, being; real
<i>satsaṅg</i>	meetings with holy teachers
<i>sat-khyāti-vāda</i>	the theory that the object of erroneous cognition is real
<i>sattā</i>	reality, being
<i>sattva</i>	the attribute of purity, light; see <i>guṇa</i>
<i>satya</i>	truth
<i>siddhānta</i>	doctrine, ultimate purpose, conclusion, correct view
<i>smṛti</i>	recollection; secondary scriptures that are humanly conceived
<i>sphurana</i>	manifestation
<i>sphūrti</i>	manifestation
<i>śraddhā</i>	faith
<i>śrāddha</i>	death anniversary ritual; see n. 527
<i>śravaṇa</i>	listening to canonical Vedānta texts expounded by a teacher; accompanied by <i>manana</i> and <i>nididhyāsana</i> ; see the discussion on p. 65, and n. 159
<i>sṛṣṭi-dṛṣṭi-vāda</i>	the theory that creation precedes perception
<i>śruti</i>	revealed scripture
<i>sthūla-śarīra</i>	gross body
<i>stotra</i>	hymn
<i>śūdra</i>	lowest caste
<i>sūkṣma-śarīra</i>	subtle body
<i>śūnya</i>	void
<i>svarūpa</i>	(inherent) nature, form, essence
<i>tādātmya</i>	identity
<i>taijasa</i>	the form of <i>jīva</i> during the dream state
<i>tamas</i>	the attribute of sloth, inertia, dullness; see <i>guṇa</i>
<i>tarka</i>	contra-factual argument

<i>tātparya</i>	meaning, intent, goal
<i>tattva</i>	truth; element
<i>tattva-jñāna</i>	Brahman-realization
<i>tripuṭī</i>	triad of cognizer, cognized and cognition
<i>tuccha</i>	false, imaginary, empty
<i>tūlājñāna</i>	secondary ignorance
<i>upādāna kāraṇa</i>	material cause
<i>upādhi</i>	“limiting adjunct; adventitious condition.” See discussion on p. 173.
<i>upalakṣaṇa</i>	designating expression
<i>upamāna</i>	analogy
<i>upanayana</i>	sacred-thread ceremony, an initiation rite marking the passage of a boy from the upper three castes into adulthood, after which he is considered ‘twice-born’
<i>upāsana</i>	meditation, contemplation
<i>vairāgya</i>	detachment
<i>vaiśvānara</i>	the form of <i>jīva</i> during the waking state; = <i>viśva</i>
<i>vaiśya</i>	trader, farmer caste
<i>varṇa</i>	caste
<i>vāsanā</i>	latent tendency
<i>Vedānta</i>	a school of Indian Philosophy, here synonymous with <i>advaita</i>
<i>Vedāntin</i>	a follower of the school of Vedānta
<i>vicār</i>	contemplation
<i>vidyā</i>	knowledge
<i>vijñāna</i>	consciousness
<i>vijñānamaya-kośa</i>	sheath of the intellect
<i>vikṣepa</i>	distraction, projection
<i>virāṭ</i>	the form of macrocosm during the waking state
<i>viśaya</i>	object
<i>viśeṣa</i>	particular
<i>viśeṣaṇa</i>	qualifier
<i>viśeṣya</i>	qualificand
<i>viśiṣṭa</i>	qualified
<i>viśva</i>	the form of <i>jīva</i> during the waking state. = <i>vaiśvānara</i>
<i>viveka</i>	discrimination
<i>vṛtti (1)</i>	“mental modification by which cognition occurs,” see discussion on p. 120
<i>vṛtti (2)</i>	significatory function
<i>vyādhi</i>	ailment, disorder
<i>vyākaraṇa</i>	[Sanskrit] grammar

<i>vyāpāra</i>	intermediate cause, mediate activity, function
<i>vyāpti</i>	invariable concomitance / co-existence
<i>vyāpya</i>	that which is pervaded
<i>vyavahāra</i>	empirical utility
<i>vyāvahārika</i>	conventional, empirical
<i>vyāvartaka</i>	that which differentiates or excludes, differentiator
<i>vyavasāya</i>	determinate cognition
<i>vyāvṛtti</i>	differentiation
<i>yajña</i>	sacrificial ritual
<i>yathārtha</i>	true
<i>yoga</i>	spiritual practice
<i>yogī</i>	a practitioner of <i>yoga</i>
<i>yoga-janya-dharma-</i> <i>lakṣaṇa</i>	relation to that which is learned of via supernatural faculties
<i>yukti</i>	logical argument, reasoning

Bibliography

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